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Historical Perspectives

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Volume XI of *Historical Perspectives* is the sixteenth journal published by Santa Clara University's Lambda Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. This edition continues the tradition of providing its readers with articles that reflect the caliber of student scholarship at Santa Clara.

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Introduction

As always, this year's *Historical Perspectives* showcases the extraordinary research of students in the Santa Clara University History Department. Through demanding courses and attention from the Department's dedicated and passionate professors, these students are well prepared to do exceptional work. The faculty's expertise and support guides students to develop interests in a wide variety of critical topics.

The entries for this year cover an extensive span of historical eras in both European and American history. Three of the authors examine a variety of feminist issues including women's contribution to peace-making, the changing definitions of gender norms, and women's roles in the preservation of history. Brigid Eckhart's article deals with local California Mission history, utilizing primary sources unique to Santa Clara University. James Hooper tackles the complicated topic of Russian-Chechen relations, and Emily Elrod, dealing with the earliest period of all the selections, discusses religious heresy in the medieval era. The collection of papers for the 2006 *Historical Perspectives* captures the many interests and represents the high level of scholarship and critical analysis of the students in the History Department.

The publication of this volume has been made possible by the sponsorship of the Lambda Upsilon Chapter of *Phi Alpha Theta* and particularly through the generosity of Mrs. Maria Damon's gift to the History Department in memory of her late husband Duane. The editors would also like to thank all the students who submitted their fine research for

consideration and express their gratitude to Judy Gillette for her indispensable work in the design and assembly of this journal. In the words of Oscar Wilde, "Anybody can make history. Only a great [person] can write it."

Courtney Marunda
Darby Riley

Dedication



courtesy Chuck Barry

In Memoriam

Norman Martin, S.J.

1914-2006

A Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated for Father Martin on February 11, 2006, in Mission Church. Father Liebscher gave the homily, which is reprinted below.

Many of us here this morning have gathered in the past to mark milestones in Father Norman Martin's life—50 years a Jesuit in 1985, 60 years a Jesuit in 1995, then 50 years a priest in 1997. Last fall, with Father Norman's health less robust, the Jesuit community arranged a subdued celebration for his 70th. anniversary in the Order. On those occasions, Norman managed to be the star of the moment and also to point toward greater things—to the ongoing work at Santa Clara, to the Jesuit apostolate, and to God.

This morning, Father Martin gathers us for one more celebration, giving thanks for the 91 years of his life, more than 70 years in the Jesuits, and 58 years of service in the priesthood. We are here because Father Martin has touched our lives, directly or indirectly—touched us with his friendship, charm, wisdom, and kindness. Once again, Father Norman also points our minds toward greater things—toward the Eucharist and the God who has called him to eternal life.

I first met Father Martin in the old Donohoe Infirmary during my own freshman orientation. My roommate had been injured playing flag football. Father Norman, seeing a light on at night, thought it a good time for a sick call. So often he would spontaneously reach out to someone in need. That was more than forty years ago. He would become my teacher, mentor, and friend.

The gift of friendship defined Father Martin's life, and the number of his friends was legion. His bonds of friendship and affection covered Santa Clara, of course, but also spanned Central and South America, Spain, Italy, the Philippines, and many other countries—and let's not forget Hawaii, where he served

during the summers in the 1980s and early 90s. Father Norman loved to be with people and to talk with them in his often a teasing way. He knew what we cared about, and because we cared, he cared, too.

Father Norman asked that we read this particular selection from John's Gospel at today's Mass. In his final hours last Sunday, we read that same passage in his hospital room because it meant so much to him. It is St. John's description of the Eucharist: Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.

For Father Martin, the most important part of life was the celebration of daily Mass, the Eucharist. His daily encounter with the Lord kept him going, as an individual and an apostle, for more than 70 years of religious life. The faith, hope, and love that he found in the Eucharist spread from the sacrament into his life, and from him to the people he touched.

So many of us took strength from Norman's assurances that he would pray for us. After dinner most nights, he went to his room and wrote notes promising prayers or a remembrance at Mass to acknowledge a birthday, mark the anniversary of a death, or join us in praying for a special concern. Just last December, I asked the Jesuits to pray for a student gravely injured in an auto accident. Norman immediately emailed me that he would offer Mass for my student the next morning—and with his typical personal touch, he added that I should be sure to get rest over the holiday.

For all his travels, Father Norman loved Santa Clara above all other places. He came here in 1933 as a freshman and left in 1935 to enter the Jesuit Novitiate. Jesuit life took him to Spokane, then Nicaragua, Colombia, Argentina, and Mexico before he finally returned to the Santa Clara faculty in 1958. He traveled widely for research, but Santa Clara was his

home. He devoted himself to the university in the history department—seeking out new students and promoting its intellectual life. On campus and through his travels, Norman knew hundreds of people and remained available to them as a teacher, fellow scholar, and priest.

For the past quarter century, Father Martin served the university in its development office. That work gave him further opportunity to care for the far-flung Santa Clara family. His interest in people told them that Santa Clara was interested, too. And always, Father Norman's warm friendship communicated God's love to the people he met, wherever he met them.

Norman's engagement with the university and its people never diminished. He had an almost proprietary air about the campus, and he held firm, even feisty opinions on all things Santa Clara—as anyone in charge soon learned. He swam daily at the Leavey Center pool, and he considered the staff and most patrons to be his friends. In bulletins much decorated with exclamation points, he regularly informed the Jesuits about the pool's hours and water conditions.

In recent years, Father Martin took pride that one of his first students in Nicaragua, Mr. Enrique Bolaños-Geyer, had been elected president of his country. When President Bolaños learned of Father Norman's passing, he wrote me in email, "Father Martin is already with the Lord, and from there he looks after us."

Indeed, Father Norman now looks after us. The Jesuits from Santa Clara and the California Province join Father Martin's many, many friends in mourning him. We shall miss him in the weeks and months ahead. Jesuit, scholar, teacher, priest—most of all, he was our friend. Now, he prays for us at the heavenly banquet, and so let us join our prayers for him at this earthly supper of the Lord.

Timothy O'Keefe interviewed Father Martin for the 2005 The Historian. The article is reprinted below.

At the beginning of the fall term of 1933, a young — and even younger looking — graduate of San Mateo High School was deposited at Santa Clara to begin his college education. The youngster had planned to attend Cal Berkeley, but his mother had other ideas and delivered him to the Jesuits at Santa Clara University. Whatever residual disappointment he may have felt soon disappeared and Santa Clara changed him completely. Within a couple of years the young economics major took another decisive step and entered the Society of Jesus as a scholastic. His long and distinguished career as a Jesuit had begun, and this July Fr. Norman Martin — now in his ninetieth year — will celebrate seventy years in the Society.

After his initial training at the Jesuit seminary at Los Gatos, “Mr. Martin,” even then called “Fr. Martin” by his students, returned to Santa Clara University where he taught English and Latin. But his stay there was cut short when the Jesuit Curia in Rome asked the California Province to send a scholastic to serve as an instructor at the Colegio Centro América in Nicaragua. With only a few semesters of Spanish language classes at Santa Clara, and not without some misgivings, Mr. Martin was soon teaching his new charges both English and World History — in Spanish. Even as a relatively novice teacher, he must have made a significant impression on his young students. After many years, one of these former students, Enrique Bolaños, recently contacted Fr. Martin, asking him to stand near him on the platform as he was sworn in as the new President of Nicaragua.

After teaching in Nicaragua, he was next assigned to Bogotá, Columbia. Had it not been for his Jesuit superior's concern about the German

submarine peril in the Atlantic during the Second World War, he would have gone to Spain for his training in theology. Instead, he spent several years in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he was ordained in 1947. In this serendipitous or providential manner began Fr. Martin's long professional association with Latin America and its rich history and culture.

Although he was accepted for graduate work at Harvard, Berkeley and Stanford, Fr. Martin chose to pursue his M.A. and Ph.D. in History at the National University of Mexico. There he studied with Professor Edmundo O'Gorman and, very soon after completing his dissertation, he published two books. His particular area of research and expertise was the history of the *vagabundos* of Colonial Mexico, pioneering social and economic research on a marginalized and neglected segment of the population. During his nine years in Mexico, Fr. Martin completed his final stage of Jesuit training and, because of his familiarity with the rich local archival sources, he guided and befriended visiting historians of the stature of Woodrow Borah and Arnold Toynbee.

After his return to the United States in 1957, Fr. Martin joined the History Department at Santa Clara and began teaching Latin American History the following year. He quickly won respect, admiration, and wide popularity as a dynamic and inspiring teacher. Fr. Martin would teach for more than two decades and establish a reputation as a "Pied Piper" attracting an appreciative following of new majors to the History Department. Despite his classroom success and his enjoyment of teaching, Fr. Martin also spent extended periods of time doing historical research in Spain (as a Guggenheim Fellow), in Mexico, and at the Jesuit Institute of History in Rome. In the late 1970s, he was asked by the University president to assist with Santa Clara's fund raising.

Although he missed his teaching and scholarly research, for the following twenty years he played a significant role in developing the financial resources for Santa Clara's expanding campus and improving educational quality.

Today, Fr. Martin remains actively involved in the University and serves as Assistant to the President for University Relations. In recognition of his many years of service, the President's Club recently celebrated Fr. Martin's ninetieth birthday at their annual dinner. Now, as he nears the celebration of his seventieth anniversary as a Jesuit, his colleagues and his hundreds of former students join together in expressing our appreciation for all he has contributed to the historical profession, the History Department, and to Santa Clara University.

In Pursuit of Peace: Jane Addams and the Woman's Peace Movement

Elaine Anderson

In the middle of a war they gathered to discuss peace. They came from the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Great Britain, Hungary, Germany, Italy, Canada and the United States. They traveled across the war-torn lands and through the war-shattered cities of Europe. They sailed across an equally dangerous Atlantic Ocean in the spring of 1915 to meet at The Hague in the Netherlands. Why would 1,150 women risk their lives to gather in the midst of war to talk of peace? What were they trying to accomplish? Perhaps, it was because they felt so strongly about the importance of finding a peaceful solution to the misery of war that they were willing to over-look the hardships and dangers of their undertaking. Not satisfied with simply sitting around talking of peace, the delegates to the International Congress of Women also toured the warring European capitals, meeting with representatives from all parties concerned. As Kathryn Kish Sklar and Kari Amidon comment, the overriding goal of the women who attended the Congress was "to promote peace through personal diplomacy."¹ Their chosen leader was social reformer and pacifist Jane Addams, head of the American delegation.

On April 13, 1915, forty-seven members of the

¹ Kathryn Kish Sklar and Kari Amidon, "How did Women Activists Promote Peace in Their 1915 Tour of Warring European Capitals?" *Women and Social Movements, 1600-2000*, Website: <http://womhist.binghamton.edu/>. (4/2005).

American delegation to the Hague Conference sailed from New York. Most prominent among the delegates was social activist Jane Addams. She had long been known for her work among the lowliest and poorest of Chicago's citizens. In 1889, Addams and her longtime friend, Ellen Gates Starr founded Hull House where, as noted by author Daniel Levine, she created "an effective challenge to a view of man as a selfish individual engaged in ceaseless battle with other selfish individuals."² As Hull House grew, both in size and reputation, Addams worked tirelessly on a seemingly endless parade of social issues. Like so many reform-minded social workers of the day, Addams joined the struggle to prohibit child labor, to promote better housing, and to regulate employment for women. In addition to her social work, Jane Addams was active in the women's suffrage movement.

While she had been an advocate for women's rights as early as 1897, it wasn't until 1906 that Addams became active in the woman suffrage movement itself. Historian Allen Davis notes that in that year she joined the National American Suffrage Association. Addams spoke to women's clubs, college students, faculties, and "in public lectures [argued] for woman's right and responsibility to take a more active roll in government and society."³ In 1912, she became involved in the Progressive Party and Theodore Roosevelt's campaign for the presidency. Like many other social reformers, Addams saw the Progressive Party as a means to bring about reform and social justice to America. Roosevelt

² Daniel Levine, *Jane Addams and the Liberal Tradition*. (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1971), 37.

³ Allen F. Davis, *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 188.

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and the Progressive Party adopted a number of social issues in their campaign platform including a plank supporting women's suffrage. According to Allen Davis, in her involvement with the Progressive Party, Jane Addams saw a way "to help the cause of women and to promote woman suffrage."⁴

Addams had her differences with other supporters of the woman suffrage movement. Most advocated a closed system with the vote for upper- and middle-class women. Some even allowed that working-class women should have the vote. Jane Addams, however, consistently advocated the vote for all women, including poor and immigrant women. She maintained that immigrant women "needed the vote to protect themselves and their families from exploitation by government and society."⁵ She would testify before congressional committees and travel extensively through the East and Midwest speaking everywhere, arguing for the vote for all women, rich and poor alike, naturalized citizen as well as native-born. This concern for poor and immigrant women who worked long hours at mind-numbing jobs in order to see that their children had a better life was a theme to which Addams returned again and again. Mothers and children would also be at the heart of her pacifism.

Pacifism had been a part of the American landscape long before World War I. However, prior to the Great War pacifism had been sectarian in its nature. According to historian Charles Chatfield, pacifists had been "motivated by obedience to religious injunctions against killing and against complying with the mili-

⁴ Ibid., 184.

⁵ Ibid., 187.

tary,”⁶ and had not directly challenged government policy. In the years preceding World War I, peace advocates were businessmen and educational leaders. The peace movement had a definite patriarchal as well as elitist quality. These men valued order and distrusted any challenge to authority. However, with the advent of the war, the order they valued and the authority they trusted fell into disarray. By the time the United States entered the war, many of the peace movement’s leaders had joined the war effort causing a great deal of consternation within the movement. The movement became divided between those who desired peace and those who demanded it. Emotions ran high. In an article for *Forum*, John Bruce Michell wrote in 1916:

Before the European war it was not necessary for a Pacifist to defend his sanity. He was hailed a peacemaker. To-day the Pacifist is branded as disloyal, a coward, a propagandist. Voices that are now hushed by the din of dollars and the War Spirit once were hailed as exponents of a world peace. Some of the world’s greatest thinkers believed world peace possible, honorable regulation of local issues feasible. To-day the howl of preparedness cries like a hyena for blood through the land.⁷

Like Michell, there were many pacifists who refused to compromise their principles. According to

⁶ Charles Chatfield, “World War I and the Liberal Pacifist in the United States.” *The American Historical Review* Vol. 75, No. 7 (Dec., 1970), 1920.

⁷ John Bruce Michell, “Why I Am a Pacifist.” *Forum*. Jul 1916; VOL. LVI.

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Chatfield, those wartime pacifists reorganized the American peace movement. They gave it “much of the structure, leadership, social concern, and rationale that would characterize it for over a generation.”⁸ This remnant of the pre-war peace movement viewed the war as a threat to the values they had worked so diligently to maintain. It was their belief that only a concerted social action could solve the problem of war. Historian Charles DeBenedetti notes that Jane Addams was one of those pacifists who believed that peace had its foundation in social action rather than in nationalism. Addams regarded peace as a social dynamic “that subsisted more in organized acts of simple decency than in the collaboration of nation-states.”⁹

Europe had been at war for almost three years by the time the United States entered the conflict in April 1917. By this time, the horrors of modern warfare were abundantly clear. Troops, on both sides, suffered under trench warfare; men ‘going over the top’ into the face of withering machine gun fire; and, for the first time, being bombarded from the sky by enemy aircraft. From the outset, American civilians had volunteered to work for the cause of the Allies. In their book, *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-18*, authors Meirion and Susie Harries describe the appalling conditions these volunteers, many of them from the sheltered and privileged upper-class, faced on the Western Front in France. The Harries quote Dr. William Woolsey who, after a stint in a British casualty clearing station, wrote of the:

⁸ Chatfield, 1922.

⁹ Charles DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform In American History*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. 1980), 88.

Long lines of groaning or morphinised patients awaiting their turn to be put on the table. The task seemed simply hopeless. Seven tables were going night and day. We worked sixteen hours on and eight hours off in rush times. Abdomens followed amputations and as many as twelve shrapnel or shell wounds on the same man would stare you in the face.¹⁰

Dr. Woolsey was also witness to the catastrophic effects of the newest terror of the war – the air raid. He noted that while in the midst of surgery, three earth-shaking explosions racked the clearing station. When the lights came back on the devastation was clear. There were “a few pieces of twisted iron and a big twelve foot hole in the ground where the cook house used to be. The cook’s liver lay up against my bell tent wall...”¹¹ As the war in Europe ground on and the details of horrific battles, the inhumane slaughter of troops, and the newly recognized psychological effects of modern warfare became clear, pacifists, like Jane Addams vowed to do whatever they could to end the insanity.

By the end of 1914, there were a number of organizations dedicated to peace and peaceful solutions to war on both sides of the Atlantic. One of the most prominent organizations in the United States was the Women’s Peace Party founded in January 1915, by Jane Addams at the behest of suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt. As the former president of the principal

¹⁰ Meirion and Susie Harries, *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918*. (New York: Random House, 1997) 45.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

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woman's suffrage organization, the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, Catt could see, as noted by C. Roland Marchand, the "potential *contributions* of women in the search for peace."¹² It was obvious to the leadership of the woman's suffrage movement that the peace movement in the United States was "over-masculinized."¹³ This was more than an ardent suffragist like Catt could tolerate. Men had tried and failed to keep the civilized nations from the horrors of war. Now it was time for women to bring forth a new movement based on morality, humanity, and just plain common sense. Carrie Chapman Catt approached Jane Addams about creating a new women's organization dedicated to promoting peace. Addams, the social reformer, suffragist and pacifist, was the logical choice. The New Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. hosted the organizational meeting of the Women's Peace Party. Thereafter, the national headquarters would be in Chicago so that Party Chair Addams could continue her work at Hull House. The first seventy-seven delegates were from women's organizations as varied as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Women's National Committee of the Socialist Party. The author of an article in *Current Opinion*, in March 1915, called the manifesto of the Women's Peace Party "unsurpassed in power and moral fervor by anything that has been issued

¹² C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 188.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 192.

here or abroad since the Great War began.”¹⁴ The new organization’s manifesto included such demands as were common in all groups of the peace movement. They demanded a limitation of arms, mediation of the European conflict, the creation of international laws to prevent war, an international police force instead of armies and navies, the removal of the economic causes of war, and a governmental commission to promote international peace that included both men and women as participants. However, the heart of their manifesto read:

As women, we are especially the custodians of the life of the ages. We will no longer consent to its reckless destruction. As women we are particularly charged with the nurture of childhood and with the care of the helpless and the unfortunate. We will not longer accept without protest that added burden of maimed and invalid men and poverty-stricken widows and orphans which war places upon us...Therefore, as the mother half of humanity, we demand that our right to be considered in the settlement of questions concerning not alone the life of individuals but of nations be recognized and respected.¹⁵

Here for the first time women had created an organized effort to promote world peace. These women did not have the vote, but felt strongly enough about peace that for a time, the urgency of peace united the

¹⁴ “Ideals of Women Engaged In a Crusade for Peace.” *Current Opinion*. March 1915; Vol. LVIII, No. 3.

¹⁵ Ibid.

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various groups within the suffrage movement.

What appealed to both factions of the suffrage movement was primarily its position on women as ‘the mother half of humanity.’ Women were charged with the future of their children and the care of the sick and elderly and were to endure it all without protest. It was no longer enough, according to author Harriet Hyman Alonso, women “were sick and tired of being exploited as a result of poor governmental judgment, greed, and violence.”¹⁶ The position of the new organization hit a chord among women’s rights activists. Within a year the Women’s Peace Party had grown from an initial eighty-five charter members to 512 active members in thirty-three local branches. By the following February, there were 40,000 members in two hundred branches and affiliated groups.

As is the case in large organizations with members from varied backgrounds with varied opinions, the Women’s Peace Party had its own internal conflicts. Jane Addams in Chicago, and Lucia Ames Mead from Massachusetts favored a more conservative stance that addressed peace over suffrage. Their goal was to achieve the cooperation of government officials in keeping the United States neutral and out of the war altogether. The ‘radicals’ of the Women’s Peace Party were centered in the New York branch. The membership of the New York group also wanted to gain the cooperation of the government, but also sought “societal changes that would end the causes of war, especially where those causes had become ingrained

¹⁶ Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace As a Women’s Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women’s Rights*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press) 1993, 64.

within the economic and legal structures of the United States.”¹⁷ Crystal Eastman was the force behind the New York branch of the Women’s Peace Party. Eastman, a self-proclaimed socialist-feminist, was joined by other women who took a militant stand on women’s issues such as reproductive rights, labor unions, and, of course, suffrage. While the radical element of the Women’s Peace Party would ultimately split with the organization, in the beginning the primary focus of all parties was the continued neutrality and non-intervention on the part of the United States.

“Despite the war, women have held two international conferences in Europe in behalf of peace, which is more than men appear to have done.”¹⁸ So wrote the unknown author of an article for *Current Opinion* in July of 1915. In March, Jane Addams had received an invitation to attend an International Congress of Women to be held at The Hague in the Netherlands. The invitation came from the president of the Dutch suffrage society, Dr. Aletta Jacobs. She urged the members of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance “to unite and ‘make future wars impossible’”.¹⁹ Addams had her doubts about the whole affair, which she expressed in a letter to her friend and fellow suffragist, Lillian Wald. She considered the many possibilities of failure, “indeed, it may even do much harm,” however the fact that so many women were willing to fail may be what it would take to “break through that curious hypnotic spell which makes it

¹⁷ Ibid., 65.

¹⁸ “The Significance or Insignificance of Women’s Protest Against War.” *Current Opinion*. July 1915; Vol. LIX, No. 1.

¹⁹ Anne Wiltsher, *Most Dangerous Women: Feminist Peace Campaigners of the Great War*. (London: Pandora Press, 1985), 56.

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impossible for any of the nations to consider peace.”²⁰ Addams overcame her doubts and decided to attend the Congress. It would be her first step toward the internationalization of the woman’s peace movement.

The Congress was originally to be held in Berlin. However, the onset of the war had caused the German suffragists to withdraw the invitation. In an effort to keep the peace movement from faltering, the Dutch society of suffragists took the initiative and offered to hold the conference in the neutral Netherlands. It was no small feat for the delegates to travel through a continent at war to attend the Congress. Three countries, Russia, France and England, made travel for their peace delegates virtually impossible. Only three of the 180 British delegates were able to get to the Congress. The three French delegates were imprisoned in France for preaching peace. The only Russian delegate to attend was a woman who was actually living in Germany at the time and escaped recognition as she traveled to The Hague. Belgian delegates were unable to get permission from German authorities to cross the frontier, although five Belgian women managed to pass through the frontier undetected. Then there were the American and Canadian delegates who crossed the Atlantic putting themselves at risk of U-boat activity.

Opening speeches to the International Congress of Women at The Hague were given on the evening of April 28, 1915. Initially there was some discord as a Belgian delegate pleaded for justice for her ravaged country and German delegates argued their country was fighting in self-defense. Ultimately, the focus of the Congress was shifted back to its original purpose

²⁰ Levine, 204.

– seeking a way to stop the madness of war. With Addams elected as president of the executive board, the conference delegates were able to get down to the business of finding a peaceful solution to the war. As they examined the issues before them it was very clear that ending the war in Europe was not going to be nearly enough. This international conference of women suffragists, pacifists, and social reformers was not going to be satisfied with anything less than the abolition of war altogether. Among the resolutions passed by the delegates was one “to [recognize] the right of people and nations...to independence and self-government,” and another “favoring arbitration and calling for the exertion of moral, social and economic pressure on nations refusing to refer their disputes to arbitration or conciliation.”²¹

Before the conference came to its conclusion, Rosika Schwimmer, a prominent Hungarian journalist and suffrage activist, urged the women to visit the leaders of the European nations and plead the cause of peace. “When our sons are killed by the millions, let us, mothers, only try to do good by going to the kings and emperors, without any other danger than a refusal.”²² The Congress made the decision to send two delegations to capital cities across Europe to discuss the idea of ongoing neutral mediation. From May through July, the two groups made thirty-five visits to heads of state in eleven countries. In the Introduction to *Women at The Hague*, editor Mercedes M. Randall notes that:

²¹“The Significance or Insignificance of Women’s Protest Against War.” *Current Opinion*. July 1915; Vol. LIX, No.1.

²² Alonso, 68.

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Before their governments realized what the women were about, they had visited fourteen countries in five weeks (without benefit of autos and airplanes) and interviewed twenty-two prime ministers and foreign ministers, the presidents of two republics, a king, and the Pope.²³

Nothing like it had ever happened before. A delegation of ladies, with no experience in international affairs and no official standing, traveled from one warring capital to another attempting to talk the heads of state to come to their senses and accept neutral mediation. In most cases their reception was polite but non-committal.

The American press, however, had a field day with the women of the International Congress. Addams was singled out by the American press as an “unpatriotic subversive out to demasculinize the nation’s sons.”²⁴ One of the conferences most prominent detractors was Theodore Roosevelt. The former president proclaimed the women to be “hysterical pacifists” and said their platform was “both silly and base.”²⁵ More thoughtful detractors focused, not on the women as inexperienced meddlers, but rather on pacifism itself. While many thought the pacifist ideal laudable, they also saw it as flawed and, under the current conditions, inappropriate. In 1915, Philip Marshall Brown in an article entitled *The Dangers of Pacifism*, touched on several of

²³ Jane Addams, Emily G. Balch and Alice Hamilton. *Women at The Hague: The International Congress of Women and Its Results*. Edited by Mercedes M. Randall. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1972), 12.

²⁴ Alonso, 69.

²⁵ Davis, 223.

the main sticking points of the pacifist ideal when war is at hand. Brown discussed the problems of the pacifist demand for arbitration. He noted that pacifists, in general, had no real concept of the nature of arbitration; that it is in reality the handmaid of diplomacy. When "diplomacy can find no solution, then war alone can decide" the issue.²⁶ American pacifists were discrediting the cause of peace by pressuring the European nations to accept mediation to solve their political problems. Brown applauded the United States policy of non-intervention believing that it was "an extremely prudent policy to observe at this crisis."²⁷

Like many of the more ardent nationalists in America at the time, Brown also expressed his disgust with pacifism and "the spirit of cowardice" and materialism it was spreading among American men and boys.²⁸ He reviled the selfishness that would cause someone to shirk his Christian duty to help his fellow man:

In failing to glory in the magnificent idealism of the soldiers of all the opposing armies now in combat who are joyfully giving their lives for something not themselves, who are inspired by a transcendent national ideal, pacifism is leading the rising generation to worship at a sordid, selfish shrine. It is fostering a spirit of cowardice of a peculiarly abhorrent kind.²⁹

²⁶ Philip Marshal Brown, "The Dangers of Pacifism." *The North American Review*. Jul 1915; VOL. CCII, No. 716, 61.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 62.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

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Pacifism, in short, belittled nationalism, loyalty and the sentiment of self-sacrifice. It was, at best, a nice idea that simply wouldn't work. At worst, it aided and abetted the enemy by demoralizing the American public and demonizing the men who fought and died for their country.

Addams personally suffered for her stance on the war. An offhand remark at the end of a speech she gave on her return to the United States in July 1915 created a firestorm of controversy and cost Addams dearly. As she concluded her talk, Addams remarked that one of the worst ordeals for soldiers was the bayonet charge. She continued on to say that every army had to give some kind of stimulant to the troops before they would engage in such an action. The Germans had a "regular formula," the English troops were given rum, and the French were given absinthe before a bayonet charge was possible.³⁰ The idea that troops had to be given alcohol before they could do their duty was a bombshell. The press and public, alike, went wild. Addams had openly challenged the myth that the "soldier fought and died because of his sense of duty and his love of country."³¹ The public was outraged. Addams was vilified in the press. Richard Harding Davis, a popular novelist and war correspondent, expressed the attitude of many when he commented that Addams denied the soldier the credit of his sacrifice, stripped him of his honor and courage, and told his children that their father did not die for them, instead "he died because he was drunk."³²

³⁰ Davis, 226.

³¹ Ibid., 226.

³² Ibid., 227.

In spite of all the campaigning and lobbying by the Women's Peace Party, the United States entered the war in April 1917. Jane Addams was profoundly saddened at the advent of war because so many women found satisfaction, even joy, in supporting the war effort. After much soul-searching, she began a speaking tour on behalf of Herbert Hoover's Department of Food Administration. In addition to speaking to housewives about food conservation, author Carrie Foster notes that Addams "stressed the importance of creating an international organization after the war," in an effort to "preserve peace."³³ She continued to speak and write on the role of women as providers. The Women's Peace Party also followed Addams' low-key, non-threatening approach and concentrated its efforts on education always keeping its focus on the establishment of an international organization dedicated to peace. When President Woodrow Wilson presented his Fourteen Points in a speech to Congress in January 1918, the Women's Peace Party enthusiastically endorsed Wilson's "goals for a postwar world of peace and stability."³⁴ Wilson had adopted virtually every one of the resolutions passed at The Hague Congress.

With the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, the Great War officially came to an end. As they had planned, the women who had attended the International Congress of Women at The Hague in 1915 began organizing a second meeting of the Congress. They met in mid-May 1919 at Zurich. There were 211

³³ Carrie A. Foster, *The Women and the Warriors: The U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1946*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995). 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

participants from across Europe who attended the Zurich meeting. They protested the blockade of Germany and the terms of the Versailles Treaty. "How could disarming only one nation create world peace?"³⁵ They approved, in principle, of the League of Nations, but felt that all nations should be invited to participate, especially Germany. The women also advocated a charter be incorporated into the Treaty allowing for equal rights for women, including suffrage. Among the other items the group recommended to be a part of the women's charter was an "economic provision for the service of motherhood."³⁶ Most of the delegates had worked tirelessly for women's rights over the years. They worked for economic and personal freedoms through both trade unions and socialist parties. Their cause was peace and social justice for women and children. Even though the war, which had brought them together in 1915, was now over, the second International Congress of Women could see their work toward a lasting peace was not done. Delegate Catherine Marshall proposed that a permanent organization be formed. Marshall stated that "only in freedom is permanent peace possible."³⁷ The delegates decided that their international sisterhood should continue as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Jane Addams was elected the first president of the League. In the true meaning of sisterhood, the German delegation was given equal representation. How could it be otherwise? The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was, unlike the League

³⁵ Alonso, 81.

³⁶ Ibid., 82.

³⁷ Wiltsher, 210.

of Nations, open to women from every nation, as well as women from any nationality who thought of themselves as separate from the group in power. This created an ethnic diversity not seen in the League of Nations. In November of 1919, the U.S. Women's Peace Party voted to become the U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

In the end, Jane Addams and the Women's Peace Movement left a permanent mark on the American landscape. For Addams, peace was not something that one could simply say was desirable. Peace was a way of life – a way to preserve life. She fought, not only to end war, but to end the causes of war. She realized early on that women were the victims of war as much as the soldiers who fought and died. Women's bodies could be violated, their homes could be destroyed, and their children could be left to starve. If their men came home at all, they were often physically maimed or mentally scarred leaving women with an additional burden to bear. Women had a vested interest in peace. Historian Terrance MacMullan wrote that:

Addams chose women as her audience because she recognized that women were habitually and experientially familiar with the devastation of war in ways that men were not...women are not innately more compassionate, but more practiced at experiencing human need and less familiar with the opiates of masculine honor, nationalism, and antagonism that dull men to the waste of war.³⁸

³⁸ Terrance MacMullan, "On War as Waste: Jane Addams's Pragmatic Pacifism." *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Vol. 15, No. 2, 2001, 97.

According to Daniel Levine, when Jane Addams entered the Rockford Female Seminary in the fall of 1877, she entered an institution where feminism was taken seriously by the faculty. From the very beginning of her education, she was taught “women had a supreme duty to preserve morality, culture, and the heritage of western civilization.”³⁹ Addams believed that women had a responsibility to oppose war. They were the mothers of each new generation and, therefore, responsible for the care and education of the future of humanity.

Women’s suffrage also played a critical role in the peace movement. Career suffragist, Addams was fervent in her belief that women should have the same rights as men. “All women needed the franchise in order to bring their natural human sympathies more effectively to bear on the problems of industrial America.”⁴⁰ A woman who could vote would be able to protect herself and her children from exploitation. It was an easy step from suffrage to pacifism. Women were the nurturers of human kind and they would not sit idly by and watch it be destroyed by men’s vanity. The women’s demand for the vote was based on their responsibility to the community and those social issues that fell into the feminine domain. The prevention of war was one of the single most important issues of the day. As “the mother half of humanity” women had a right to speak out and make their voices heard in regard to the war and America’s neutrality.

While the United States ultimately went to war in 1917, the importance of Jane Addams and the Women’s Peace Party cannot be underestimated.

³⁹ Levine, 17.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 181.

Addams and the women of the Party performed feats unheard of in that day and age. Women traveling throughout a war-torn continent to sue for peace and demand an end to war forever had never before happened. Party members suffered ridicule and scorn from political leaders and the public alike. But did they accomplish anything in their pursuit of social justice and peace? The Treaty of Versailles was a miserable failure. The brutal terms imposed on Germany only helped to foster the rise of Adolf Hitler and lead to World War II. The League of Nations, a first-ever attempt to create a body of nations working together to solve economic and social issues in an effort to prevent future wars, was ultimately a failure as well. These entities were devised and conducted by men who were incapable of rising above personal and political pettiness and animosity.

Jane Addams and the women of the W.I.L.P.F., however, accomplished the one thing that men had not been able to do – create a permanent organization dedicated to peace that is all-inclusive. Today, the W.I.L.P.F. is still an active organization dedicated to peace. In their mission statement, the women of the W.I.L.P.F. pay tribute to Jane Addams and the other ‘founding mothers’ who recognized over ninety years ago that “peace is not rooted only in treaties between great powers or a turning away of weapons alone, but can only flourish when it is also planted in the soil of justice, freedom, non-violence, opportunity and equality for all.”⁴¹

⁴¹ *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*.
Website: <http://www.wilpf.org/>. (April 2005).

“Evil-looking, suspicious, [and] treacherous” or “Affable, liberal and friendly”?: How Franciscan Missionaries and Spanish Seculars Described California Indians, 1769-1792.

Brigid Eckhart

Few topics have recently fascinated historians more than the interactions between native peoples and Europeans. Spain spearheaded many of the earliest and most sustained advancements into the Americas. Although the Spanish had made their so-called discovery of Alta California during the sixteenth century, it was not until the government in Madrid perceived a threat of Russian or British intervention in California in the eighteenth century that the crown decided to defend that territory by colonizing the land and pacifying the Indians.¹ Missionization provided an effective and low-cost system to make firm Spain’s claim to dominion over California. The Franciscans, already present in Mexico, Baja California, and other outposts of the northern frontier, were chosen to found self-sustaining missions where the native Californians would be simultaneously Christianized, civilized, and pacified. The first expeditions to San Diego and Monterey, and subsequent trips by land and sea, involved the combined effort of *padres*, soldiers, officers, Christian Indians, non-military government

¹ I will subsequently use California to signify this upper region, that is, what is now the state of California. References to Baja California will always be explicit.

officials, and, on occasion, Spanish settlers. Although nearly all these individuals had experience with the indigenous peoples of New Spain, their impressions of the California Indians were different. For example, the men were, as one Franciscan said, usually “as naked as Adam in Paradise before he sinned.”²

The first colonizing expeditions were documented extensively. An enormous number of these texts have been translated into English, providing an invaluable resource to the study of Spanish California. In the early twentieth century, the historian Herbert Eugene Bolton published numerous volumes of translated diaries and correspondence. His work has been augmented by many others. Consequently, in addition to the primary accounts, a wealth of secondary sources exists that illustrates many aspects of Spanish involvement in California. Bolton, in addition to his translations, authored many articles and books on the subject of the Spanish borderlands. However, he undertook no comparison of the documents produced by the soldiers and the Franciscans. Indeed, there has been little comparative analysis between the secular and religious accounts of the natives.

Through letters, diaries, reports, and narratives, many members of these first expeditions left behind detailed accounts of the Californians.³ These documents are revealing in their choice of words and in the specific facets of Indian life they contained. They

² Juan Crespi, *Fray Juan Crespi: Missionary Explorer on the Pacific Coast, 1769-1774*, trans. and ed. by Herbert Eugene Bolton, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1927), 130.

³ I will use “Californians” to describe the indigenous peoples in California.

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expose, at some points, disgust with the behavior of the aborigines and, at other times, they acknowledge pleasant appearance. There are striking similarities between the descriptions given by religious observers, the *padres*, and secular observers, the soldiers, officers, and officials.⁴

Where these descriptions differ reflects the reasons the Spaniards were in California. The officers paid extra attention to the details of Indian life in order to make a more useful official report to the Councilor of the Indies and to assess the overall threat of the Californians to the soon-to-be constructed missions and presidios.⁵ The *padres* were more interested in their own personal safety, the immorality of native practices, and the likelihood of converting the *indios*. These differing motives appear to mold the contrasting descriptions, while the similarities in the accounts reflect a cultural and social background shared by the Spaniards. The ultimate goal of the Franciscans and the soldiers was the same: to pacify the Indians through colonization, civilization, and Christianization. All three of these factors motivated both the religious and the seculars on these excursions.

There were three significant, early campaigns to California. The first one, in 1769, was called the Sacred Expedition and included four prongs, two sea-bound explorations and two campaigns. Among those who left detailed accounts were Fathers Junípero Serra and Juan Crespi; Gaspar de Portolá, governor of Baja

⁴ The contrast being drawn throughout this paper is between the religious and the seculars, toward this purpose I will use "officers," "soldiers," and "officials" interchangeably.

⁵ A *presidio* is basically a Spanish fort.

California; Ensign Miguel Costansó, an engineer; and Lieutenant Pedro Fages.⁶ Later in 1774, Juan Bautista de Anza left from Sonora with the intent of establishing an overland route to California; among his party were Fathers Juan Díaz and Francisco Garcés.⁷ Then in 1775, a second Anza group left Sonora for California, and Fathers Pedro Font and Garcés accompanied Anza.⁸ The accounts from these expeditions were extensive and, not surprisingly, they devoted much space to the Indians they encountered. The diaries of these men were later augmented by more official reports of California, for example those written by Pedro Fages in 1775 and José Longinos Martínez, a naturalist and explorer, in 1792. These more extensive documents provide a wealth of detailed information about nearly every aspect of native life. Additionally, Father Francisco Palóu, in Mexico, wrote narratives about the Sacred Expedition and about Serra's life based upon second-hand knowledge and personal correspondence. Eventually, Palóu himself traveled to California where he kept his own diary. Together these accounts create a broad spectrum of depictions of the indigenous people who populated California. These descriptions of the natives by both secular and non-secular Spaniards can be grouped into several catego-

⁶ Iris Wilson Engstrand, "The Occupation of the Port of San Diego de Acalá, 1769," *Journal of San Diego History* 24, no. 1 (1978): 91, 94.

⁷ Herbert Eugene Bolton, trans. and ed., *Anza's California Expeditions*, vol. 2, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1930), 1.

⁸ Herbert Eugene Bolton, trans. and ed., *Anza's California Expeditions*, vol. 3, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1930), 1.

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ries: general characteristics, physical features, appearance, armament, customs, food, and language.

Both the padres and the soldiers made pithy sketches of the Indians they encountered. These were, very frequently, the only statements made about particular groups of aborigines, and they served to highlight what the Spanish found most essential in their initial contacts. These most basic images often focused on personality or character traits. Although there was a myriad of different tribelets, the delineations of these attributes were remarkably similar, whether penned by Franciscans or Spanish officers.⁹ On the whole, the initial depictions of the *indios* were complimentary, and contain promise for successful relations between the colonizers and the Californians.¹⁰ The diary of Fray Crespi, who embarked on the overland route to San Diego and then proceeded with Portolá north along the coast in search of Monterey, stands as an example. Containing the words “friendly,” “affable,” “docile,” “kindly,” and “mild,” his renderings reflect a tendency to depict the aborigines in complimentary terms—unless something happened to alter this position.¹¹ Thus, he portrayed some indigenous people in simultaneously positive and negative terms. “They are very intelligent Indians, noisy, bold, great traders, covetous, and thievish,” he

⁹ *Tribelet* is frequently used by anthropologists and historians today to describe the political structure of the California Indians, implying less sophisticated political structures than would constitute a *tribe* as was encountered elsewhere.

¹⁰ “*Indios*” refers to the Spanish word for Indians, from which the English word was derived.

¹¹ Crespi, *Missionary Explorer*, 12, 30, 46, 162.

said of one tribelet.¹² Although there is no explanation why he perceived these natives to be thievish, one might presume that some incident occurred that made them stand out from the multitude of others that he recounted with apparent affection.

Font was less likely than Crespi to describe the *indios* in genial terms. Indeed, Font frequently commented on “the inclination which every Indian has to steal,” and on many occasions he denounced indigenous people as “malevolent, bad-hearted, and evil intentioned.”¹³ This appears to be a motif in Font’s diary, though there are some exceptions in which he presents the natives as “gentle and good natured.”¹⁴ The personalities of these two men seem to account for their differing perceptions despite their similar positions as Franciscans.

The padres’ narratives were not wholly dissimilar than those made by the officers of the crown in that they were both positive and negative. Pedro Fages, a Spanish officer who went to San Diego with the first expedition and later made a survey of California, noted specifically that the Californians were “remarkably affable and peaceable.”¹⁵ Positive accounts were given by Fages as well as by people with even less interaction

¹² Crespi, *Missionary Explorer*, 117-8.

¹³ Pedro Font, *Font’s Complete Diary: A Chronicle of the Founding of San Francisco*, trans. and ed. by Herbert Eugene Bolton, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1931), 263, 147.

¹⁴ Font, *Complete Diary*, 345.

¹⁵ Pedro Fages, *A Historical, Political, and Natural Description of California by Pedro Fages, Soldier of Spain*, trans. by Herbert Ingram Priestly, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1937), 16.

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with the natives. The sentiment of Francisco Antonio Mourelle, a sailor, perfectly illustrated the differences in the reactions to the aborigines: "The distrust indeed which we naturally entertained of these barbarians, made us endeavor to get as great an insight into all these as possible, yet we never observed anything contrary to the most perfect friendship."¹⁶ This statement revealed the Spaniards' predisposition to perceive the *indios* negatively, but in his case, Mourelle observed the opposite to be true. Nevertheless, many favorable portrayals were counterbalanced with sentiments similar to those recorded by Fray Font. José Longinos Martínez, for example, described some Indians as "given to thievery."¹⁷ Anza expressed a similar perception. Accounts of soldiers and missionaries contained such a wide assortment of impressions that any generalization about their perceptions of indigenous character is very difficult. Moreover, the fact that this variety was universal to both soldiers and missionaries suggests a similar way of perceiving the natives that reflected the similar cultural backgrounds and experiences with Indians in New Spain.

In addition to describing the character of the Californians, explorers sometimes included verbal illustrations of physical features. These depictions varied widely, but many mentioned with some frequency skin color, health, and physical build of the Indians. As with the previous category, often only a

¹⁶ Francisco Antonio Mourelle, *Voyage of the Sonora in the Second Bucareli Expedition*, trans. by Daines Barrington, (San Francisco: Thomas C. Russell, 1920), 24.

¹⁷ José Longinos Martínez, *California in 1792: The Expedition of José Longinos Martínez*, trans. by Lesley Byrd Simpson, (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library Publications, 1938), 46.

short sketch of these aspects was included in their accounts. Notable exceptions are found in the detailed reports of Fages and Martínez. However, Fages's account is difficult to generalize about due to its wide contrasts as evidenced in this delineation: "The natives throughout . . . are, generally speaking, rather dark, dirty, of bad figure, short of stature, and slovenly, like the preceding ones, except those who live near the Río de los Temblores . . . these Indians are fair, have light hair, and are good looking."¹⁸ Within this short passage he described one group in very negative and disapproving terms, while acknowledging the opposite could also be true. Moreover, this distinction might reflect cultural bias. In contrast, most accounts by the Franciscans contained barely a notice of physical features.

Fages provided the most information about aboriginal skin color. The hues varied from a "dark" color to "light brown" to fair skin.¹⁹ The inclusion of the color of skin points toward the purpose for which a report was written. As its title clearly states, *A Historical, Political, and Natural Description of California*, Fages's work was meant to present a full and accurate explication of all aspects of the region, including native life.²⁰

The other Spanish accounts, both by laymen and padres, contained little note of skin color. If this aspect garnered any attention at all, it consisted of a brief note that the complexion of one tribelet was the same as another's.²¹ Moreover, the fact that pigmenta-

¹⁸ Fages, *Description*, 21.

¹⁹ Fages, *Description*, 11.

²⁰ This type of work fits into the "ethnographic" tradition created in sixteenth century texts, studied by A. Pasdeu.

²¹ Mourelle, *Voyage*, 55.

tion was usually *not* included in these compilations is as significant as if it had been explicitly cited. The exclusion indicates that native coloration was a *given*, implying that it was almost a non-descriptor, and not essential. While skin color was not generally or universally described, it would be worthy of mention if it deviated from the accepted norm. For example, Father Crespi provides an oddity with his description of one aborigine group as “of a fair complexion, bearded, and white.”²² Certainly *white* natives qualified as a significant variation from the dominant theme.²³

Physical health and stature were more frequently referred to than coloration. Although these inclusions seem to be more objective, reflecting the reality of indigenous life, they still involved subjective judgments. Through the eyes of the Spaniards, what exactly would qualify as *robust*, or conversely as *degenerate*? Both terms were used frequently. Some Indians were “so lean, and emaciated,” Anza related, “that they looked more like skeletons from the grave

²² Crespi, *Missionary*, 283.

²³ At this point, the accuracy of this depiction must be brought into question. A few years after Crespi's diary was written, one of the Anza expeditions traveled through the same area where these supposedly white Californians lived. Father Font in his *Diary* gave an account of this second journey to the area: “We went hoping to see such Indians [the ones described as “white”], but although . . . we saw the same ones as Father Crespi and passed through the same villages, we saw no such white Indians, but only black ones like all the rest” (345). Due to this second report, it is unlikely that Crespi's account can be trusted. Nonetheless, it illustrates the point.

than human beings.”²⁴ Another description, this one by Fages, focused on a lack of food as the reason for poor health.²⁵ Both Anza and Font used the term *degenerate* with some frequency.²⁶ Yet, Font’s delineations demonstrate his tendency to describe the aborigines in less than favorable terms. The most vehement expressions were Font’s, while Crespí rarely comments on this subject. On the secular side, Mourelle, a sailor, mentioned that the Californians he encountered were “tall and stout.”²⁷ This reference to healthy natives is rare among more frequent citations of the unhealthy condition of indigenous life. However, because few accounts mention the health of the natives drawing general conclusions is difficult.

Facial features and attractiveness were also mentioned. Font criticized many of those he encountered. “The men are of medium stature, the women being somewhat smaller, round-faced, flat-faced, and rather ugly.”²⁸ Pedro Fages met some natives whom he did not judge to be ugly. His most explicit reference to “good looking” Indians was coupled with a clause that also described them as “fair, [and] hav[ing] light hair.”²⁹ A few lines earlier, he mentioned another group of aborigines, though not explicitly termed *ugly*,

²⁴ Herbert Eugene Bolton, trans. and ed., *Anza’s California Expeditions*, vol. 3, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1930), 67.

²⁵ Fages, *Description*, 30.

²⁶ See both Font’s *Diary*, pages 195 and 279, and Bolton’s *Anza*, vol. 2, page 87. This probably refers to poor build as opposed to lacking moral sensibilities, as may be implied in a modern context.

²⁷ Mourelle, *Voyage*, 36.

²⁸ Font, *Diary*, 195.

²⁹ Fages, *Description*, 21.

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their lack of attractiveness can be inferred. They were “dark, dirty, [and] of bad figure.”³⁰ This coupling of adjectives presents a possible link between *shades* of skin and concepts of beauty.

The category of native appearance consists of those attributes conditioned by indigenous culture, namely: clothing, hair, and body ornamentation. Although the appearance of the *indios* might vary depending on the tribelet, there were many similarities in the way that this reality was perceived by the invaders. Font and Crespí provided the most numerous and detailed records of the Indian clothing—or its lack. They frequently commented on male nakedness, which was almost universal. But, the reporters failed to express shock at this fact, perhaps due to their previous exposure to other tribelets in California. Sometimes these portrayals incorporated value judgments about immodesty. A few accounts contained images of body coverings of some sort, noting that these did not conform to Spanish standards of decency. For instance, Mourelle related one native custom in which the Indians “bind their loins and legs quite down to their ancles [sic].”³¹ While a few lines earlier, Mourelle stated that “the men however do not wear any covering.”³² Although difficult to imagine exactly what the binding of loins consisted of, this fashion apparently failed to qualify as clothing at all in Spanish eyes.

Although the men described were almost universally naked, the clothing of the women received extensive attention from Fathers Font and Crespí. What

³⁰ Fages, *Description*, 21.

³¹ Mourelle, *Voyage*, 25.

³² Mourelle, *Voyage*, 25.

concerned these padres was the *modesty* of the women's attire. According to Crespi, "the women go modestly covered in front with strings which they wear tied at the waist and behind with skins of deer or seal: they also cover the breasts and the rest of the body with a sort of cape made of hare and rabbit skins."³³ Martínez, the naturalist and explorer, offered a different perspective. "The dress and adornment of the women is graceful. From the waist down they customarily wear two very soft pieces of buckskin, the edges of which are cut into fringes and ornamented with strings of beads . . . which give a very pretty effect They arrange it very gracefully, all their flesh being covered."³⁴ Thus, while Martínez did refer to *modesty* directly, he centered more on the *gracefulness* and *beauty* of the clothing. The divergence between what the religious man and the secular man chose to make the focus of his description reveals one of the few differences that existed between these Spaniards. An officer was much more likely to make judgments about the appeal of the native women. In contrast, a Franciscan was more concerned with modesty, and by extension, the morality or sinfulness of the covering. Likewise, a padre was not inclined to comment on the allure of the females.

While mentioning the clothing seems expected, the inclusion of native hair in these accounts appears more curious. The length, style, and even the manner of trimming, were described to varying degrees. Although both seculars and religious depicted the aborigine's locks, the majority of comments come from

³³ Crespi, *Missionary*, 17.

³⁴ Martínez, *Journal*, 43.

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the former. According to Martínez, Indians dressed it: “with great taste . . . [and] in the following fashion: the bangs cut very short and smoothed forward . . . which they trim daily by means of a piece of burning pine bark.”³⁵ Mourelle commented that some of the natives’ hair was “disheveled.”³⁶ Anza likewise took note of the Indians’ tresses, describing their length, how they were worn—in two instances, “on top of their heads.”³⁷ Fray Font also commented on the length of the hair and its style.³⁸

Many accounts referred to male facial hair. Anza provided a description of the Channel Indians: “These here have sparser beards than those on the other side.”³⁹ Both Font and Crespí also mentioned beards. However, no explicit references were made to any clean-shaven *indios*. Why this feature was deemed important enough to be included in some descriptions is difficult to speculate on. One reason could have been that the hirsute Spaniards would have found the majority of the beard-less Californians an oddity. Indeed, if most of them were clean-faced, those with beards would have seemed singular.

A third feature of appearance was ornamentation. Frequently in along with the references to native dress and hair, the *indios* were described as painted or in some other way decorated. “Their arms,” wrote Mourelle, “are covered with circles of small points in the same manner that common people in Spain often

³⁵ Martínez, *Journal*, 43.

³⁶ Mourelle, *Voyage*, 25.

³⁷ Bolton, *Anza*, vol.3, 136, 139.

³⁸ Font, *Diary*, 279, 329.

³⁹ Bolton, *Anza*, vol.3, 138. The *Channel Indians* were the natives of the Santa Barbara Channel.

paint ships and anchors.”⁴⁰ Font also noted that some of the Californians were painted with “their faces striped and marked.”⁴¹ Both missionaries and explorers included this aspect in their portrayals of the *indios* because it sparked their curiosity and notice.

Some natives exhibited other types of body ornamentation. For instance, Font related that “all these Indians whom we saw today [have] ears and noses pierced and little sticks thrust through them.”⁴² Piercing received Mourelle’s attention also. Among the aborigines who lived near the coast, or traded with the tribelets of the coast, shells were depicted as being used as decorations on their clothing and often as jewelry. Crespi noted both that “the women wear . . . bracelets of shells” and that “hanging from their hair they had snails and seashells.”⁴³ Other accounts observed that “sweet-smelling herbs” were worn either around the head, neck, or waist.⁴⁴ These types of decoration received less frequent notice than body painting. The lack of portrayals in some reports may indicate an absence of ornamentation among some tribelets. Or it may mean that the practice was of little consequence or interest to the Spaniards.

Most accounts included at least a word or two about Indian weaponry. Franciscans and government officials alike noticed when the Californians were armed and the quality of weapon construction. Both made assessments of how warlike the natives were. Most frequently bows and arrows armed the *indios*,

⁴⁰ Mourelle, *Voyage*, 25.

⁴¹ Font, *Diary*, 279.

⁴² Font, *Diary*, 329.

⁴³ Crespi, *Missionary*, 37, 81.

⁴⁴ Mourelle, *Voyage*, 25.

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but the Spaniards mentioned clubs and other weapons as well. These delineations varied from simple statements, such as Crespi's portrayal that "they are well armed with bows and quivers of arrows," to more detailed ones.⁴⁵ For instance, Fray Font gave an elaborate account: "some of them . . . [were] carrying bows and arrows, for all had very good ones and well made, the bow of good wood, small and wound with tendons . . . and the arrows of little reeds, very smooth, well made, and with flints, transparent and very sharp."⁴⁶ Anza, Fages, and Costansó all mentioned whether or not the Indians bore weapons.⁴⁷

These officials, concerned with the pacification of the Californians and the security of the Spaniards, would have needed to be aware of armament. The missionaries were equally conscious of the presence of weapons. They had reason to be concerned for their personal well-being, especially after a native uprising in San Diego in which one padre was killed.⁴⁸ In a letter to Palóu, Serra related the personal danger he felt. "Here on three different occasions I have been in danger of death at the hands of these wretched heathen."⁴⁹ Nevertheless, there was disparity in the level of fear expressed by the padres. This might be indica-

⁴⁵ Crespi, *Missionary*, 4-5.

⁴⁶ Font, *Diary*, 376-7.

⁴⁷ See Bolton, *Anza*, vol. 2, 87-88, and 90, Costansó, Miguel, *The Costansó Narrative of the Portolá Expedition: First Chronicle of the Spanish Conquest of Alta California*, trans. Ray Brandes (Newhall, Calif.: Hogarth Press, 1970), 85, and Fages, *Description*, 17.

⁴⁸ Palóu, *Founding*, 87. For a detailed account of the rebellion see Font's *Diary*, 186-243.

⁴⁹ Palóu, *Founding*, 94.

tive of personality differences; the level of fear of each individual influenced how important it was to pay attention to the armament of the Indians.

Two assessments, one secular and one religious, of the native propensity for war complement each other. Font, with his familiar fearfulness and sensitivity, made several such mentions in his diary. However, in the three separate examples where he addressed this subject, he always concluded that “they do not give signs of being warlike or evil intentioned.”⁵⁰ Conversely, Fages described some Californians as warlike and others as not. Perhaps, the term *docile* might translate into *unwarlike*, and thus would be important for this category. Taking into account these additional expressions, there were many more references to docility than were first apparent. Yet, this passage from Palóu reveals underlying Spanish attitudes: “In proof of this kindly disposition which is found among that vast and most docile number of heathen . . . Don Gaspar de Portolá assures us . . . that our Spaniards remain in Monte-Rey as secure as if they were in this very capital [in Mexico]. But nevertheless the new Presidio has been left sufficiently garrisoned with troops and artillery and abundant munitions of war.”⁵¹ This assessment underscores the ultimate and base-line insecurity of the Spaniards and their inability to trust their experiences of the *indios*, instead relying on predetermined perceptions.

Many accounts are too brief to provide a solid understanding of the Spanish perceptions of Californians’ customs and behavior. The two exceptions are

⁵⁰ Font, *Diary*, 333.

⁵¹ Palóu, *Founding*, 116.

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the documents written by Fages and Martínez, where the level of detail is unequalled. One behavior solely described by the padres was the native reaction to religious overtures. Commonalities are evident in their statements. "I made the sign of a cross on each of them," related Palóu, "and they were very attentive to the ceremony although they did not understand it nor the purpose to which it was directed."⁵² Father Crespi's narration mirrors Palóu's: "I have made them say the acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and, without knowing what they did, they repeated it with devotion and tenderness, or at least their voices caused tenderness in my heart."⁵³ While both Palóu and Crespi acknowledged that the Indians did not understand the padres' behavior, the latter admitted to a strong desire to discover an innate reverence for God among the *indios*.

Marriage and sexual practices constituted another category of description by priests and laymen alike. Fages related the practice of chiefs taking more than one wife and how marriages were consummated. "When a single man and a single woman are seen together at dawn savagely scratched, it is a sign that they have contracted matrimony during the night . . . [and] they are considered publicly and notoriously as man and wife by the entire village."⁵⁴ Crespi mentioned the number of wives as well, but he did not make any value judgments about this practice. However, the other padres and seculars often did not

⁵² Bolton, *Anza*, vol. 2, 412-3.

⁵³ Crespi, *Missionary*, 138.

⁵⁴ Fages, *Description*, 21, 58.

depict these aspects of native life in any detailed way.⁵⁵ To the priests especially, these customs would likely have been considered sinful, although they were rarely mentioned.

The missionaries' silence on these topics makes sense when seen in the context of their reports. The effort and time required to ascertain the essential features of aboriginal life was not available to the priests on their first trips into California.⁵⁶ This can be seen by comparing one padre's report with the more detailed report of Fages. During his trip to Monterey in 1769, Fray Crespi related a curiosity. "In this village, as well as others in the channel, we have seen heathen men wearing the dress of women We have not been able to understand what it means, nor what the purpose is; time, and an understanding of the language, when it is learned, will make it clear."⁵⁷ This clarity was achieved with Fages's illumination in 1775: "I have substantial evidence that those Indian men who, both here and farther inland, are observed in the dress, clothing, and character of women . . . pass as sodomites by profession . . . and permit the heathen to practice the execrable, unnatural abuse of their bodies. They are called *joyas* and are held in great esteem."⁵⁸ Fages explained in more detail what Crespi did not have time to figure out.

⁵⁵ This statement is limited to the accounts I have been referencing.

⁵⁶ Alternatively, the priests might have been worried about their superiors' reaction to reports of sodomy among the *indios*. In other words, this could have been an attempt to hide a less-than satisfactory feature of Indian life.

⁵⁷ Crespi, *Missionary*, 171.

⁵⁸ Fages, *Description*, 33.

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The subject of food concerned both the Franciscans and the government officials. The vitals eaten, the method of obtaining them, the availability of and implements used to get and store food were all delineated by the Spaniards. Because the missions required substantial efforts to feed the native population, it is not surprising that this information was provided abundantly in the accounts of all the Spaniards. Since the first expeditions to California arrived at San Diego, food had become a significant object of concern. In the beginning, the colonizers tended to rely upon provisions shipped by sea, but this proved difficult at first due to the irregularity of the shipments.⁵⁹ Once the basic rations were provided for missionaries and soldiers, a new problem arose: to entice the aborigines to enter the missions. Frequently, they were offered food.⁶⁰ Once the natives stayed, it was the responsibility of the padres to ensure a constant supply of nourishment. The difficulty in securing this varied by mission; some were able to sustain the *neophyte* populations through farming, while others were forced to allow the *indios* to live primarily in their villages and obtain food in the traditional way.⁶¹ Consequently, providing information about the food of the indigenous people was vital to the beginnings—and success—of the missionization process.

⁵⁹ Engstrand, "The Occupation," 95-6.

⁶⁰ Edward Castillo, "The Other Side of the 'Christian Curtain:' California Indians and the Missionaries," *The Californians* 10, no. 2 (1992): 10. See also: R. Douglas Hurt, *The Indian Frontier, 1763-1846*, (Albuquerque, N. Mex.: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 58.

⁶¹ *Neophyte* was the word used to describe the Indians who converted to Christianity.

The many distinct languages in California provided another challenge to converting and pacifying the *indios*. As one historian noted, “California proved [to be] one of the most linguistically diverse regions in the world.”⁶² Father Font’s *Diary* contains many descriptions of the language of the aborigines, which he termed as “ugly” or worse. “There are no letters to express such barbarous and ridiculous cracking and whistling and guttural sounds.”⁶³ Martínez expressed the sense of confusion felt at the variety of tongues, many of which were entirely distinct from the others.

⁶⁴ With such a vast array of languages, the process of conversion was difficult. It would not have been practical for the Franciscans to learn all these native speeches, so instead they relied on the neophytes to learn Spanish and then to teach the other Indians the catechism in their native tongues.⁶⁵ In short, the priests’ initial reactions to the languages eventually impacted and anticipated proselytization methods.

If there was one underlying feature that informed Spanish perceptions of the Indian world—whether of language, culture, or physical appearance—it was utility. Throughout the accounts of the secular and religious explorers of eighteenth-century California, a threefold purpose is evident: to convert the *indios* to Catholic Christianity; to acculturate and civilize the indigenous people as Spaniards; and to pacify the Californians in order to facilitate the preceding goals.

⁶² James A Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and the Franciscans in the Missions*, (New Haven: Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004), 15.

⁶³ Font, *Diary*, 149, 279.

⁶⁴ Martínez, *Journal*, 48.

⁶⁵ Hurt, *Indian Frontier*, 58-9.

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These objectives affected the ways in which the Spaniards described the aborigines, yet there are still other aspects that informed them. Although some differences existed, similarities between accounts given by the missionaries and the officials are striking. These commonalities reflected not only a shared purpose, but also a common cultural and social conditioning that produced values and norms that exerted enormous influence. Their perceptions of Indian life were conditioned by these societal norms and values, which were shaped by nearly three centuries of experience with the indigenous peoples of North and South America. Many variations between the accounts occurred not between Franciscan and soldier, but between differing personalities. These men came to California with certain expectations and also with specific concerns and goals. Their observations were also affected by their apprehensions. Security of person and of settlements was a paramount concern for both the padres and those responsible for protecting all the Spaniards, the soldiers and commanders. This multitude of factors helps to explain how and why the Spaniards depicted the people they encountered throughout California in the manner that they did.

Reexamining Heresy: The Donatists

Emily C. Elrod

On the first day of June in A.D. 411, Carthage, two hostile groups of Christians faced off in the summer heat to settle their differences. They met at the massive Baths of Gargilius (*Thermae Gargilianiae*).¹ On one side of the baths stood 284 Donatist bishops and on the other side 286 orthodox Christian bishops gathered.² Both sets of bishop claimed for their authority the doctrines of St. Cyprian and the creed that each professed hardly differed from the other. Yet since 312, they had oppressed each other with a violence that only the arrival of Islam in the area around Carthage in A.D. 698 could diffuse.³ For the orthodox Christians, the Council of Carthage ought to have ended the confrontation; for the Donatists, it became just one more battle in their hundred-year struggle to resist centralization by the Roman state.⁴

The division between the orthodox Christians and Donatists began during the Persecution of Diocletian (303-05). Diocletian had hoped to avoid extreme measures to suppress the Church "by bringing pres-

¹ Brent D. Shaw, "African Christianity: Disputes, Definitions, and 'Donatists'" in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Religious Movements: Discipline and Dissent*, ed. Malcom R. Greenshields and Tomas Robinson (Lewistown, New York: Edwin Mellen P, 1992), 6.

² Peter Brown, "Religious Dissent in the Later Roman Empire: the Case of North Africa," *History*, XLVII, (1963): 289.

³ Allan D. Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine Through the Ages: an Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 285.

⁴ Shaw, "African Christianity," 19.

sure to bear upon the clergy,” so as “to render the laity leaderless, and . . . bring about general apostasy.”⁵ The clergy were to hand over Scriptures to the authorities to be burnt, an act of desecration that became known by the Donatists as the sin of *traditio*. Bishops who committed this sin had no spiritual power and became known as *traditores*; Mensurius, the Bishop of Carthage who died in 311, stood accused of *traditio*.⁶ Upon his death, Caecilian filled the vacancy. He was unpopular among many Christians due to his opposition to the popular cult of the martyrs. Rumors of his alleged cruelty towards the martyrs of Abitina in 304 circulated before his consecration.⁷ His enemies then accused one of his consecrating bishops, Felix of Apthungi, of having committed the sin of *traditio*. Secundus, the bishop of Tigisis and primate of Numidia, endorsed this accusation largely because of an injury to his pride and status at the time of Mensurius’s consecration, to which he had not received an invitation.⁸ It was thus declared by the bishops of the province of Numidia that Mensurius had not been truly consecrated. Majorinus, a member of the faction opposing Mensurius, took his place, but

⁵ Gerald Bonner, *St. Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 28.

⁶ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 28-29. Many clergy avoided this sin by handing heretical books over to the authorities. In a letter to Secundus (bishop of Tigisis and primate of Numidia), Mensuris wrote how he had given heretical books over to the authorities to be burned instead of Scripture.

⁷W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1952), 17; Maureen A. Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa: The Donatist World* (Minneapolis: Fortress P, 1997), 9.

⁸ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 30.

in 313, shortly after his consecration, he died.⁹ Donatus of Casae Nigrae succeeded to the office and gave his name to the emerging controversy over *traditio*.¹⁰

Both the Donatist and orthodox Christian churches claimed Cyprian (d. 258), who was later made a saint, as their inspiration and appealed to his life and his writings. Cyprian had been concerned with the Christians who had fallen away from the Church in the time of the Decian persecution of 250 to 251 and sacrificed to the pagan gods.¹¹ These people were known as the *lapsi*. Cyprian accepted rebaptism of the *lapsi* or any apostate who returned to the communion of the Church. After a suitable length of time, the penitent could receive communion.¹² In 255-6, Cyprian defended this view against Stephen, Bishop of Rome, who demanded that he follow the Roman custom of one baptism. The Church in Rome threatened him with excommunication if he did not obey. Cyprian acquiesced, since he believed in the importance of the unity of the Church although he never renounced his views on rebaptism. The underlying argument of his major work, *De Unitate*, even claimed that outside of the Church there could be no valid ministry since there was no valid spirituality. There is only *One Church*, he wrote, “one origin, one mother prolific with offspring; of her are we born, by her milk

⁹ Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages*, 284.

¹⁰ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 31.

¹¹ Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 126; Edward White Benson, *Cyprian: His Life, His Times, His Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1897), 65.

¹² Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 24, 279.

we are nourished, by her spirit we are quickened.”¹³ In a paradoxical turn of events, this bishop who had persistently preached on the importance of unity would later become the principal authority for a schismatic church.¹⁴

The problems that afflicted Donatists in the early to mid-fourth century were not of their own making but rather the effect of Emperor Constantine's actions. With the proclamation of the Edict of Milan (313), Constantine made Christianity a legal form of worship in the Roman Empire. He was the first of the emperors in the words of an orthodox Christian admirer, to “[repudiate] errors . . . [and acknowledge] . . . the majesty of the unique God.”¹⁵ He considered himself the head of the church he had legalized and he hoped his position as a Christian Emperor would help unify his empire, just as former pagan emperors considered themselves to be the empire's first religious citizens. The Donatists resisted the claim to spiritual leadership by the Emperor; Donatus himself later asked what the Emperor had to do with the Church?¹⁶ To establish his control of orthodoxy, Constantine turned to advisors and bishops who supported his spiritual hegemony against “various brands of Christianity that [had] evolved in different regional and cultural contexts around the Mediterranean.”¹⁷ From 316-321, the

¹³ Ibid., 280-1.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ In W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1984), 485.

¹⁶ “Quid est imperatori cum Ecclesia?” E. L. Woodward, *Christianity and Nationalism in the Later Roman Empire* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1916), 36.

¹⁷ Shaw, “African Christianity,” 9.

Roman state would use violence against the followers of Donatus, whose deaths sealed a reputation for Donatism as the church of the martyrs. Even their successful resistance to state centralization depended on regionalism. The Donatists represented a local orthodoxy within the North African Christian tradition opposed to the orthodoxy manufactured at Constantine's court.¹⁸

Several scholars have researched the religious and social roots of Donatism. W. H. C. Frend's *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (1952), is the most comprehensive work on the Donatist schism, linking the rise of Christianity to social revolution. In that view, heresy and schism cannot be explained in religious terms only. In Frend, Donatism belonged to a continuous native tradition within Berber religious history. In his "Religious Dissent in the Later Roman Empire: the Case of North Africa" (1961), Peter Brown challenges any argument for purely local roots to the controversy. Brown contends that the tension between orthodox Christians and the Donatists echoed throughout much of the Christian church. No local model for discontent can explain its appearance and persistence in the Latin world. Studies of Donatism within a narrower time frame include Gerald Bonner's *St. Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies* (1963). Bonner gives a concise overview of Donatism and Augustine's response to it, without an original interpretation for either. More recently, Brent D. Shaw has concluded, after a close reading of documents surrounding the Conference of Carthage in 411, that the historian has played into the

¹⁸ Ibid., 11-12.

dominant power structure by labeling North African Christians “Donatist” schismatics when they were simply continuing a local tradition of Christianity.¹⁹

Primary sources useful for examining this debate include Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Life of Constantine* (written after 337) and his *Ecclesiastical History*, both valuable records for examining the roots of heresies in the Church. Optatus of Milevis’s *On the Schism of Donatists* (circa 366) is another important source that St. Augustine made central in his anti-Donatist writings.

The modern historian often assumes with Frend that only an exceptional degree of social and ethnic tension could provoke the violent religious protests of Donatism.²⁰ That view, however, does not effectively emphasize the religious aspects of the schism. While the Donatist schism is arguably more political than theological in origin, historians have only recently begun to drift away from this social/ethnic theory for the schism to look at religion as a motivating factor in the split. By tracing the roots of the schism in Constantine’s policies to the controversy’s culmination in Augustine’s response, this paper seeks to show how social, ethnic, and religious attitudes combined to create the Donatist schism.

¹⁹ Brent D. Shaw, “African Christianity: Disputes, Definitions, and ‘Donatists’” in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Religious Movements: Discipline and Dissent*, ed. Malcom R. Greenshields and Tomas Robinson (Lewistown, New York: Edwin Mellen P, 1992).

²⁰ Brown, “Religious Dissent,” 250.

Social and Ethnic Attitudes of Donatism

Christianity in North Africa

Christianity in North Africa was an interesting blend of local and universal traditions.²¹ In the latter half of the third century A.D., Christianity triumphed over paganism in North Africa. It was not, however, any “conversion from heathendom to a higher form of religion.”²² It was common for people to become quasi-Christians and preserve many pagan aspects of worship. By that measure, even Constantine remained a quasi-Christian. The harsh environment in which early Christians had to survive readily stirred fears of unseen spiritual powers to enlist or placate.

Many features of Native African paganism translated easily to Christianity. For example, the Berbers’ worship of Saturn tended towards monotheism. Their existing submission to an omnipotent Divine Will likely aided the process of conversion. Most importantly, the worshippers of Saturn came primarily from the lower classes in the towns and country.²³ In early third century A.D., the Saturn cult was especially strong in Numidia, and many of the Saturn sites of worship would later become Donatist strongholds.²⁴ The worship of Saturn died out almost completely between 240 and 275 when a massive conversion to Christian-

²¹ R. A. Markus, “Christianity and Dissent in Roman North Africa: Changing Perspectives in Recent Work,” in *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest*, Derkek Baker, ed. *Studies in Church History Volume 9* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1972), 21.

²² Frend, *Donatist Church*, 104.

²³ *Ibid.*, 80; 100-104.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 83.

ity occurred on the High Plains. By the mid-third century, Christianity had triumphed throughout of North Africa.²⁵

The Berbers believed that spiritual powers ruled their lives. The Christianity they accepted was not the Christianity of later Western Europe with its forgiving and merciful God. Theirs was a harsh God, waiting to bring the world to the Last Judgment. For the majority, an acceptance of Christianity did not mean denying any of the basic ideas of African paganism. For example, martyrdom was an idea that came to dominate the Christian imagination of North Africans who believed it to be the only death worthy of a Christian. The emphasis on martyrdom had its roots in local religious tradition and Donatism embraced this theme of martyrdom.²⁶

Donatist Geographical Distribution

Different landscapes and cultures provide the background to Donatism and orthodox Christianity in North Africa. Evidence from written sources, such as the exchanges at the Council of Carthage and Augustine's letters, shows that Donatism was largely a Numidian and agrarian movement.²⁷ There are two different geological formations in North Africa: the Tell, about ninety miles of forest and fertile valleys extending from the Tunisian and Algerian coasts, and the High Plains, an area about 2,700 feet above sea level

²⁵ Ibid., 83, 87.

²⁶ Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa*, 57. For a more thorough discussion of Donatist martyrdom, see Maureen A. Tilley, trans., *Donatist Martyr Stories: The Church in Conflict in Roman North Africa* (Liverpool: Liverpool U P, 1997).

²⁷ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 48-50.

with little rainfall. Donatism largely occupied the inland plains while orthodox Christianity occupied the coastal cities and towns on the Tell.²⁸ The areas were divided climatically as well as physically—over the Tell and to the east, rainfall was moderate, while rain falls heavily near the coast. Due to the preserve of waters, Carthage, the coast, and river valleys experienced relatively high fertility. These areas could sustain a large population “supported by mixed farming—wheat, vines, and stock-raising.”²⁹

The lack of rainfall on the High Plains, which included southern Numidia, Maurentania Sitifensia, and part of Byzacenia, prevented urban centers from developing and meant a low standard of living for its people.³⁰ The inhabitants of the High Plains necessarily differed from their neighbors on the more Romanized coast and were far more rooted in their ancient traditions.³¹

By the late third century Donatists dominated Christianity throughout Numidia. They also held sway over the High Plains and the country of the Nemenchas that extended south to the Sahara Desert.³² In this entire area, only about six sees had an orthodox bishop. However, Orthodox Christians dominated larger towns, like Theveste, Mascula, Macomades, and Thamugadi. Yet even there where energetic orthodox bishops preached from the pulpits and an occasional Donatist converted, popular opinion

²⁸ Ibid., 30.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 31.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 52.

was rising against orthodoxy.³³

Evidence from over two hundred archaeological sites in Romano-Berber villages has confirmed many of the churches in Numidia were Donatist.³⁴ At least a dozen have the Donatist war cry “Deo Laudes” inscribed on them.³⁵ The impression gained from these sites is that Donatism was the faith of choice for most people in the hinterland. Orthodox Christianity was simply unable to maintain itself in Numidia.³⁶

While adherence to Donatism or orthodox Christianity was related to regional geographical and climatic conditions in North Africa, there may also have been connections between religious allegiance and certain economic interests.³⁷ For example, Donatism may have been associated with the cultivation of olive trees, for some of the olive presses carry Christian inscriptions and even the Donatist motto “Deo Laudes.”³⁸

Like geography, linguistic divisions mapped religious differences onto the North African landscape. There were two native languages in Roman North Africa: Punic, written in a Semitic script, and “Berber,” which was also called “Libyan.”³⁹ Latin was the imported imperial language used everywhere for official

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 53.

³⁵ Ibid., “Praise God.”

³⁶ Ibid., 55.

³⁷ Ibid., 56.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Fergus Millar, “Local Cultures in the Roman Empire: Libyan, Punic and Latin in Roman Africa,” *Journal of Roman Studies* (1968), 128. “Berber” is an Arabic loan-word from the Greek *barbaros*. Millar refers to it as “Libyan” because no ancient literary source calls it “Berber.”

business. Many people knew Latin throughout the provinces by the mid-third century though it remains unknown but doubtful if the peasantry was knowledgeable in Latin. In Augustine's time, there are some references to preaching in Punic for certain congregations. All the same, references to Punic go unmentioned in the works of Tertullian and Cyprian.⁴⁰ While Latin was not simply the language of the cities while people in the countryside spoke Libyan (and, thus, largely made up of the Donatists), it does appear that on the high plains of Numidia the indigenous population spoke Berber and were peasants.⁴¹ In other words, language, geography, and Donatism did map onto each other.

Constantine and the Donatists

Donatism's early years can only be known imperfectly.⁴² Scholarly opinion about when the controversy first emerged fluctuates between 306-7 and 311-312. The writings of Tyconius suggest the earlier date, while the 311-12 marks the death of Mensurius and the disputed election of Caecilian. This paper adopts W. H. C. Frend's date for the schism of 312 because Donatus is absent from the controversy until that year.⁴³

The Emperor Constantine inherited an unexpected

⁴⁰ Ibid., 128; 133-34.

⁴¹ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 57-8.

⁴² T. D. Barnes, "The Beginnings of Donatism," *Journal of Theological Studies* (April 1975): 13.

⁴³ W. H. C. Frend and K. Clancy, "When Did the Donatist Schism Begin?" *Journal of Theological Studies*, 28 (1977): 104-109.

conflict when he gained control of Africa in 312.⁴⁴ In three separate letters to Anullius, the proconsul of Carthage, in the winter of 312-13, Constantine ordered that property seized from the Christians during the Great Persecution under Diocletian be immediately restored and that the orthodox Christian clergy over whom Caecilian presided be released.⁴⁵ One of these letters, written in either March or April of 313, would make it difficult later for Constantine to arbitrate the controversy since he ordered that “these men . . . over which Caecilian presides . . . shall be held totally free and exempt from all public offices, to the end that they may not by any error or sacrilegious deviation, be drawn away from the service due to the Divinity.”⁴⁶ This was an important decision, because it granted Caecilian’s clergy exemption from municipal levies while also allowing them to pledge their property against the city’s taxation.⁴⁷ This is an example of how Constantine’s policy of supporting the traditional social structure of the Empire would conflict with the Church—the priesthood was in danger of becoming a refuge for the curial class. Now orthodoxy had financial benefits which undercut within elite opinion the position of Caecilian and his supporters even more.⁴⁸

After receiving petitioners who denounced Caecilian, Anullius subsequently replied to Constantine. The

⁴⁴ Ibid.; T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1981), 56.

⁴⁵ Ibid., Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* trans. Christian Frederick Cruse (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1962), 428-29.

⁴⁶ Eusebius, *History*, 433.

⁴⁷ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 146.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

petitioners had given Anullius two documents containing charges against Caecilian—one sealed and the other unsealed. He thus appealed to the “best of emperors” to “make haste to have judges given to [the Africans] from Gaul.”⁴⁹ Constantine complied with his request, sending to Rome “ten bishops, who appear to accuse him, and ten others, who he himself may consider necessary for [Caecilian’s] cause.” The bishop of Rome would preside over the case.⁵⁰ This was a decisive moment in the history of the early church because “for the first time schism or unorthodoxy could become an offense punishable by law.”⁵¹

Constantine, now a Christian, believed it to be a duty “freely entrusted to [his] fidelity” to settle disputes between bishops.⁵² The hearing he proposed was not a negotiation but a Church council “according to ecclesiastical precedent.”⁵³ On 2 October 313, Constantine reached his decision: he acquitted Caecilian, and condemned Donatus because he had allowed rebaptism, which was now declared illegal.⁵⁴ Constantine did not wait to hear what the opposition had to say before reaching his verdict. The reason for his bias is unclear, but evidence shows that two ecclesiastical advisors, Hosius and Ursus, who were

⁴⁹ Optatus, *Against the Donatists*, trans. Mark Edwards (Liverpool: Liverpool U P, 1997), 1.22.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 147.

⁵² Eusebius, *History*, 429.

⁵³ Barnes, *Constantine*, 57.

⁵⁴ Majorinus died during this interim period and Donatus of Casae Nigrae was chosen as his successor. Donatus was probably not consecrated before heading to Rome. Frend, *Donatist Church*, 148.

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already prejudiced against the Donatists, influenced Constantine. Hosius, bishop of Corduba, was personally hostile to the Donatist cause and suspected of heresy himself. Constantine paid little attention to this alleged heresy, however, and his newfound zeal for the Christian Church made him favor the orthodox Christians under Hosius's direction.⁵⁵ In addition to this influence, Constantine followed the recommendation of Ursus (the financial officer of the Imperial Estates in Africa), instructing him to give Caecilian 3,000 *folles* for his use during the winter of 312-13.⁵⁶ Constantine eventually appealed to the bishop of Rome, who decided in favor of Caecilian.⁵⁷ Constantine's decision to side with Caecilian by no means ended the conflict; it only became more bitter.⁵⁸

The following year, Constantine was again approached by the Donatist opposition. Worried by accusations of prejudice which he did not himself believe, he reopened the case. A council of bishops was summoned from all the western provinces to meet at Arles on 1 August 314. At the same time, Constantine launched an inquiry into the case of Felix of Aptungi to find out if he was a *traditor*.⁵⁹ At Arles, the Donatists lost the debate once again. This time, Constantine penned a passionate letter to the orthodox Christian bishops affirming their decision: "you have . . . a better . . . destiny [than] those whom the malig-

⁵⁵ Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 145-6.

⁵⁶ Eusebius, *History*, 431. This sum of money would equal about 10,000 dollars; Frend, *Donatist Church*, 145-46.

⁵⁷ Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages*, 285.

⁵⁸ Barnes, *Constantine*, 57.

⁵⁹ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 150.

nity exceeding brilliance of the catholic religion . . . What then are they thinking of, these [Donatist] officers of the devil?"⁶⁰ Whether or not Constantine truly believed the opposition was crazed and deluded by the devil, this rhetoric effectively deprived them of any imperial authority in ministering to the faithful.

Constantine hoped dissention would end now, but he was not so fortunate. In Carthage on 19 August 314, the Donatists made their next move. A certain Maximus announced that the case against Caecilian and Felix had to be argued before Constantine himself. Maximus produced evidence in a correspondence that he sent to Constantine that Felix was indeed a *traditor*. The new evidence surprised Constantine and part of the letter condemning Felix turned out to be a forgery.⁶¹ The next months are sketchy at best, but a Donatist riot broke out, and Constantine had his verdict acquitting Caecilian publicized. For unknown reasons, Constantine ordered both parties to appear before him in Rome.⁶² Caecilian did not come, and the case was adjourned to Milan. Once in Milan, Constantine decided to travel personally to Africa to settle the case.⁶³ A war with Licinius intervened, and Constantine never visited Africa to settle the Donatist issue. Instead, in a letter dated 10 November 316, Constantine took action. He ordered all Donatist churches confiscated and the Donatist clergy sent into

⁶⁰ Optatus, *Against the Donatists*, 189; Barnes, *Constantine*, 58.

⁶¹ Barnes, *Constantine*, 58-9.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 59.

exile.⁶⁴ Repression of the Donatists followed directly. The Donatists acquired their first martyrs on 12 March 317, when Roman soldiers, on the orders of Caecilian, killed several Donatists and two Donatist bishops in Carthage.⁶⁵ Outside the city, the persecution was not as severe. But this incident contributed to the permanent split between the two churches. The fact that orthodox Christians worked with pagan magistrates and soldiers confirmed the Donatist belief that orthodox Christians were schismatics.⁶⁶

By 321, there was a complete reversal in imperial policy. Constantine would fight the forthcoming war against Licinius as a champion of Christianity, rescuing his fellow believers from pagan persecution in the East. However, he too was persecuting Christians, although they were schismatics. Constantine knew this, so on 5 May 321, he recalled all Donatist exiles.⁶⁷ This political move was veiled in theological rhetoric: "But while the heavenly medicine does its work," Constantine wrote, "our policy is to be so . . . regulated that we practice continual patience . . . Let nothing be done to reciprocate an injury."⁶⁸ Revenge was now God's alone. It was clear to Constantine that persecution and political maneuvering would not beat the Donatists; the traditions of the masses were not so easily changed.⁶⁹

With this new concession, the Donatists thrived. While the Donatists never had any of the legal privi-

⁶⁴ Ibid.; Frend, *Donatist Church*, 159.

⁶⁵ Barnes, *Constantine*, 60.

⁶⁶ Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 162.

⁶⁷ Barnes, *Constantine*, 60.

⁶⁸ Optatus, *Against the Donatists*, 196.

⁶⁹ Barnes, *Constantine*, 60.

leges of orthodox Christians, their “local influence in the cities of Africa could defeat the emperor’s intention to confer benefits” on only the orthodox Christian church.⁷⁰ Donatists forced lectors, subdeacons, and other clerics from their midst into the local senate to gain political power. In addition, they took possession of the basilica Constantine built in Cirta—and the emperor let them keep it. He even provided money to the orthodox Christians to build a second basilica.⁷¹

The Donatists exerted economic pressure over the orthodox Christians as well. While Constantine had previously exempted Caecilianist clergy from municipal obligations, by 330 the tides had changed. Now, the Numidian Donatists made their opponents accept municipal obligations, showing that they truly were supreme in the province. Constantine addressed a decree to Valentius, *Consularis* of Numidia, demanding that this practice cease, but there is no proof that it ended.⁷² Despite all of Constantine’s efforts, the Donatists continued to dominate the North African church.

Worse still for the orthodox Christians, the Donatists began to establish themselves abroad. They ventured into Spain but their undertakings led to nothing. In Rome, however, they were more successful. For a time, the Donatists were favored in Rome over the orthodox Christians because of the assumed lapse of orthodox Christian bishops during the Great Persecution of Diocletian. The Donatists by no means intended to be confined to Africa only, but in the end,

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Frend, *Donatist Church*, 163.

without any permanent converts abroad, they fell back on the region of the Empire where they originated.⁷³

In the last years of Constantine's reign, three problems faced Donatus: the independence of the Church in regards to imperial edicts, the isolation of Africa from the rest of the Christian world, and the issue of rebaptism.⁷⁴ While the orthodox Christians leaned on imperial authority, Donatus was hostile to Roman authorities, which also aligned the Donatists with the African Christian tradition of hostility to authority. Neither Roman orthodoxy nor the Roman Empire appealed to the majority of African Christians.⁷⁵

Towards the end of Constantine's reign, a council of two hundred and seventy Donatist bishops gathered. Historians know little about this meeting, except that the main issue was the validity of rebaptism. Donatus believed there could be no baptism outside the Donatist faith and favored rebaptism of orthodox Christians. Many Donatist bishops preferred to reject Caecilian and deny the validity of a second baptism. In the end, Donatus modified his position slightly to maintain his control over the African Church—rebaptism was acceptable but not required in every case. He left the issue appropriately vague.⁷⁶

Rebaptism was now a tenet of the Donatist faith with its roots in the theology of Cyprian. While Cyprian had made peace with Stephen, Bishop of Rome, for what he believed to be the greater good of

⁷³ Ibid., 164.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 165.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 165-67.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 167-68.

the Church, he did not repudiate rebaptism. The Donatist looked to Cyprian, who wrote, "To be sure, that spiritual grace [of baptism], received equally by all believers in baptism, may be diminished or increased by the subsequent conduct of our own lives," meaning that the potency of baptism changes throughout a person's life.⁷⁷ "Likewise, a person who is baptized has also to be anointed," Cyprian continues, "so that he may become the anointed of God. . . . But someone who has neither altar nor Church could not sanctify the material substance of oil. It follows that neither can there be any spiritual anointing among heretics . . ."⁷⁸ Cyprian believed that because of this, a person could be rebaptized, and the Donatists were indeed the true heirs of Cyprian's form of Christianity because of their adherence to rebaptism. However, the orthodox Christians challenged Donatist views on rebaptism because orthodox Christians believed in the validity of the sacraments—one baptism signified a commitment to the Christianity for life.⁷⁹ To them, to be rebaptized cheapened the original baptism.

Rebaptism now signified heresy. However, this did not deter followers. When Constantine died in 337, Donatus was the ascendant in Africa. After the Council of Nicaea, Caecilian disappears from the historical record. Donatism had become the religion of town, village and lower classes of North Africa.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ St. Cyprian, *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage Volume 4*, trans. G. W. Clarke (New York: Newman P, 1986), 69.14.1

⁷⁸ Ibid., 70.2.2.

⁷⁹ R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1970), 109-10.

⁸⁰ Frend, *Donatist Church.*, 168; Markus, *Saeculum*, 109.

Augustine and the Donatists

The Interim Years

From 361-63 under the reign of the pagan Emperor Julian the Apostate, there was renewed imperial tolerance for the Donatists and the orthodox Christians decided to try to enter into a debate with them once again. Optatus, the orthodox bishop of Milevis, wrote *On the Donatist Schism*, which was the first direct appeal for cooperation between the rival bishops. But the “Donatist mind was remarkably impervious to argument,” and most Donatists were not persuaded to convert to orthodoxy upon hearing the arguments against them.⁸¹

Terrorist bands of extremist Donatists formed to counter official repression. Known as the Circumcelliones, these peasants from Upper Numidia and Mauretania haunted the shrines of the martyrs, terrorized dissenters, and sought martyrdom for themselves. Their name came from the fact they lived *circum cellas*, or “around the shrines” of martyrs where they received their food. The Circumcellions carried clubs called “Israels” and later supplemented them with slings, axes, stones, lances, and swords. They raged against pagans and orthodox Christians alike, and they often sought martyrdom by suicide. As Augustine said, they “lived like brigands, died as Circumcellions, and then were honored as martyrs.”⁸² Throughout the controversy, Donatist alternatively

⁸¹ Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1997), 211-12; Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 259.

⁸² In Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 241.

encouraged and discouraged such violent behavior.⁸³

Augustine's Response

Augustine of Hippo, later to become St. Augustine of Hippo, came home to Africa from Milan in 388 and became Bishop of Hippo in 395. He returned to a divided country where the Donatist Church had expanded for three-quarters of a century and now dominated the high plains of Numidia, where Berber-speaking peasants refused to become subjects of the Roman Empire in anything but name.⁸⁴ The Donatist Church looked like it could not be beaten at the beginning of the last decade of the fourth century, for it had numbers, enthusiasm, and successful evangelizing behind it. However, within twenty years, all of this changed for the Donatists.⁸⁵

Augustine, originally from the orthodox Christian stronghold Thagaste, came into the controversy as a "foreigner in spirit" for "he did not even read the same translation of the Bible as his opponents."⁸⁶ His interpretation of the Church differed greatly from his Donatist rivals. He defended the orthodox Church as a Neo-Platonic philosopher, determined to bring the Donatists back to the universal church.⁸⁷

While the Donatists thought of themselves as a group that existed to preserve and protect an alternative to the Empire and *traditores*, orthodox Christians

⁸³ Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 172-77; Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 240-1.

⁸⁴ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 237.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 246.

⁸⁶ Brown, *Augustine*, 210.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 212.

like Augustine believed the opposite of this. They believed the Church existed independently of the human agents of the Church. Augustine's understanding of the sacraments was based on his belief in Christ as the sole giver of sacramental grace. Imperfect (and even unworthy) humans could administer the sacraments, but their imperfection would have no bearing on the validity of the sacrament. The effectiveness of the sacrament depended on the recipient.⁸⁸

In place of the Donatist church of the saints, Augustine offered a Universal Church "throughout the world and containing within itself both good and evil until the final separation of the Last Day."⁸⁹ The Donatists solved the problem of evil by withdrawing from it; for Augustine, separation was not enough. The Catholic Church could absorb the world without losing her identity. A good Christian must perform a threefold task: "he must himself become holy; he must coexist with sinners in the same community as himself, a task involving humility and integrity; but he must also be prepared, actively, to rebuke and correct them."⁹⁰ For Augustine, the Church was a body that could "absorb, transform and perfect, the existing bonds of human relations."⁹¹ Confident and expanding, Augustine's church consisted of international followers and fostered "the respect of Christian Emperors."⁹² It was an institution at once sought out by nobles and intellectuals and capable of bringing Plato's

⁸⁸ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 292.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 287.

⁹⁰ Brown, *Augustine*, 218.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 220.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 221.

esoteric truths to the masses.⁹³ It was an active, dynamic church made up of moving elements. It was not an alternative to society made up of pure and righteous members but embraced everyone.

The Donatists asked if the church was pure; if the Church was the only place on earth in which the Holy Spirit resided, how could its members fail to be pure? Augustine answered using Neo-Platonic reasoning that the world is in a state of becoming; it is in a constant state of tension where imperfect forms strive to become their ideal form, capable of comprehension by the mind alone. The same followed for the orthodox Church—the rites of the Church were holy because they participated in Christ while the reality of the church in the world is only an imperfect shadow. Those who administered the sacraments strove imperfectly to realize this holiness.⁹⁴

All the same, the Donatists had a secure position from which to debate the orthodox Christians. They had secured the popular devotion of the indigenous peasantry. They benefited from the Circumcellions, and the locale elite of thinkers and leaders.⁹⁵ The Donatist bishop of Carthage from 363 to 391, Parmenian, was a capable administrator and author. In 398, at least seven years after Parmenian's death, Augustine felt compelled to write *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani*. Apart from Parmenian, leading Donatists included Optatus of Thamugadi, Emeritus of Caeserea, Petilian of Constantine, and Primaian of Carthage, whom Augustine recognized as powerful opponents

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 217.

⁹⁵ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 244.

and described as the “most obstinate defenders of a very bad cause.”⁹⁶

Nonetheless internal dissention existed within the Donatist schism. The greatest Donatist thinker was a layman by the name of Tyconius, whom Parmenian had denounced and excommunicated. Tyconius’s “heresy” proclaimed the real division existed between the city of God and the city of the devil. In his theology the Donatist principle of separation was wrong because the church is universal. This idea, though Donatist in origin, became the basis for Augustine’s most influential work, *City of God*.⁹⁷ Parmenian restated the Donatist belief that the churches overseas had forfeited their claim to catholicity by remaining in communion with *traditores*. Tyconius, however, never joined the orthodox faith. Thus, the Donatists discarded one of their most influential thinkers.⁹⁸

The years 391 and 392 were decisive in the conflict between the Donatists and orthodox Christians. Both Parmenian and his orthodox rival Genethlius died around 391-2, leaving the sees of Carthage vacant. The orthodox Christians elected Aurelius, who was neither a scholar nor a theologian, but who was a brilliant organizer able to lead the African Church through the later phases of the Donatist controversy with Augustine’s help.⁹⁹ The Donatists elected Primian, a violent man who had neither diplomatic or leadership skills. Opposition to Primian soon began to form, lead by the deacon Maximian and led to one of

⁹⁶ In Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 244.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 245-6.

⁹⁹ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 227.

the first in a line of internal schisms: Rogatus of Cartenna and nine colleagues also broke away from the Donatists out of disgust over the Circumcellions. This Donatist group of schismatics managed to maintain themselves until Augustine's time. Claudian, the Donatist bishop of Rome, (who was expelled from Rome in 378), also formed his own party, the Claudianists. The beleaguered Primian excommunicated Maximian and committed various acts of violence that won further disdain. A deacon who had baptized the sick without his permission was thrown into a sewer with his approval. In 392, Primian was himself excommunicated and Maximian became bishop of Carthage.¹⁰⁰

The orthodox Christians used the Maximianist schism against the Donatists. They pointed out that Donatist leaders had received Maximianists back into their church without rebaptism. But what such conflicts within Donatism revealed was the narrow-minded nature of the sect. According to Gerald Bonner, Donstists lacked "breadth of vision" and "it became clear that the essence of Donatism was a despotism, enunciated by the bishops, applauded by the mob, and enforced, in the last resort, by the violence of the Circumcellions."¹⁰¹

In addition to these internal schisms, Donatism continued to weaken by allying with unsuccessful rebellions in Africa, bringing down upon itself the established imperial authority. In 346, they appealed to Emperor Constans and were unsuccessful. The Donatists had lent their support to Firmus in 372,

¹⁰⁰ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 248.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 249.

only to be later repressed under Theodosius. Thus, they had a pattern of continually attempting and failing to make a bid for supremacy in Africa, for the imperial authorities were sympathetic to the orthodox religion.¹⁰²

Augustine focused his own priesthood (from 391 to 395) in Hippo on combating Donatism. At first, he contained his action to Hippo alone. His first work, the *Psalmus contra partem Donati* written in 393, contained the “ABC’s of Donatism” in order to combat them. He described his intentions thus: “Wishing even the lowliest and most ignorant people to know about the case of the Donatists, and fix it in their memory, I wrote an alphabetical psalm to be sung to them.”¹⁰³ Augustine understood that the orthodox laity needed encouragement and instruction in how to answer Donatist propaganda. Thus, Augustine laid the foundations for his long struggle with Donatism, which would soon be carried beyond Hippo and into the entire North African Church. However, Augustine never fully realized his goal of destroying Donatism completely, perhaps because he could not convince the Donatists of their errors.¹⁰⁴

In 395, Augustine was consecrated Bishop-coadjutor of Hippo and furthered his campaign to end Donatism. Many of the books that he wrote against the Donatists are lost.¹⁰⁵ By around 400, Donatism saw its most complete domination over North Africa: Optatus of Thamugadi ruled southern Numidia and

¹⁰² Ibid., 250.

¹⁰³ In Geoffrey Grimshaw Willis, *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy* (Cambridge U P, 1950), 36.

¹⁰⁴ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 258.

¹⁰⁵ Willis, *Saint Augustine*, 40-2.

waged war on orthodox Christians and Maimianists and Africa's military commander, Count Gildo, supported him. The Circumcellions also increased their activity. When Gildo's bid for power ended in his death, the Donatists faced the inevitable repression following the failed revolt. Gildo's defeat marked a turning point in the two churches, for now imperial authority was even more likely to be sympathetic to the orthodox Christians in North Africa because they had not participated in the revolt.¹⁰⁶

The orthodox Christians in general and Augustine in particular were not idle during this time period. In 397, Augustine held conferences with the Donatist bishop Fortunius in Thubursicum Numidarum. The same year while Gildo was still in power, a third Council of Carthage decided that sons and daughters of bishops and clergy were forbidden to marry schismatics or heretics. The issue of Donatists who had converted back to orthodoxy could take holy orders would be deferred to the bishops of Rome and Milan. Apparently, the Italian bishops waffled, but in June 401 the issue was raised once again. The decision was finally made that except when clerical assistance was urgent, ex-Donatist clergy could only be laymen.¹⁰⁷

Until the fourth Council of Carthage in 401, Augustine continued to turn out works against the Donatists. Between 398 and 400 he wrote the first of his great theological works against the Donatists, *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani*, in which he defended the views of Tyconius and recounted the history of the

¹⁰⁶ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 259, 261; Frend, *Donatist Church*, 224.

¹⁰⁷ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 260.

controversy to prove Caecilian innocent. Later, he wrote *De Baptismo contra Donatistas* on the theological issue of rebaptism.¹⁰⁸ From 393 to 398, Augustine also tried—and failed—to bring prominent Donatists into a debate with him.¹⁰⁹

The Roman state did not always support orthodox Christian attacks upon the Donatists. For the rulers it was extremely important to “maintain the peace and good order of a province whose importance, as a source of supply to Italy, could not be overrated.”¹¹⁰ Up to 405, emperors preferred non-violent measures in dealing with the Donatists since they did not want to alienate a large part of the population. However, Augustine himself believed in religious coercion against the Donatists.¹¹¹ The Catholic Church was confirmed as the religion of the empire in 399, and fines could be imposed on dissenters.¹¹² In 404, the Catholic council decided to appeal to the state for the repression of Donatists. When the Catholic envoys arrived at the court, they found that the Imperial Court had already decided to put an end to Donatism.

The ex-Donatist bishop Maximian of Bagai had just

¹⁰⁸ Wills, *Saint Augustine*, 43-4.

¹⁰⁹ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 240.

¹¹⁰ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 299.

¹¹¹ Peter Brown, “St. Augustine’s Attitude to Religious Coercion,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 54 (1964): 107. Brown argues that while at first Augustine was against the religious coercion of the Donatists, he later changed his mind due to his belief in the legitimacy of using force against pagans, thinking of it as kind of Old Testament justice. Interestingly enough, Augustine never used the word *cohercitio* (where the English *coercion* stems), regarding the Donatists. Instead, he uses the word *correptio*, meaning to rebuke or set right.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 261.

testified in Ravenna and had shocked the court with his story and visible scars. Maximian had been a Donatist bishop who converted to orthodoxy and was almost killed in 403 by the Circumcelliones as a result. He had escaped to Ravenna and testified there to the bitter, violent religious feud going on in Africa.¹¹³

In 405, the government issued an “Edict of Unity” which made the schismatics liable to the penalties for heretics. The edict confiscated Donatist property for the Catholic Church, prohibited their meetings, threatened Donatist clergy with exile, and forbade rebaptism.¹¹⁴ In 411, a conference held in Carthage ended in a triumph for the orthodox Christians.¹¹⁵ One hundred years after the schism began, the Donatists were finally brought to public debate. The consequences of the conference began the decline—but not extinction—of Donatism. Only the arrival Vandals in 429 would finally blur the distinction between orthodox Christian and Donatist.¹¹⁶

After the Conference of Carthage, the Donatists immediately appealed to Emperor Honorius, but instead of finding support, they once again met repression. On the orders of the Emperor, the Donatist clergy was driven by law into exile throughout all areas of the Empire. Donatism was a criminal offense, punishable by fines ranging from fifty pounds of gold for a member of the senatorial class, five pounds for a plebian, ten pounds of silver for a Circumcellion, and beatings for Donatist slaves. Donatist property was

¹¹³ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 262-3.

¹¹⁴ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 265.

¹¹⁵ Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages*, 285; Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 301.

¹¹⁶ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 301.

handed over to the orthodox Christians. There was no death penalty for being a Donatist, as there were with previous edicts.¹¹⁷

But this orthodox success would not bring conversion to North Africa. Although Augustine seemed to regard Donatism as finished, he did admit in 420 that many Donatist conversions to orthodox Christianity were not sincere. At the same time, Augustine was becoming preoccupied with a new heresy, Pelagianism, brought into North Africa by Julian of Eclanum.¹¹⁸

The villages where Donatism was the strongest remained largely Donatist. Evidence from Augustine suggests that the countryside was largely resistant to conversion. For example, the priest Donatus of Mutugenna threw himself down a well rather than face Augustine. Archaeologists have yet to find evidence of a Donatist church that transformed into an orthodox Christian one. Thus, it is unclear how the Edict of Unity was enforced, if at all. A large portion of North African villagers may have continued their practice of Donatism well into the fifth century.¹¹⁹

To assume that by 420 the struggle with Donatism was over would be erroneous. A letter written to Augustine from the bishop Honoratus in 428 asks what is to be done in the case of a barbarian invasion, illustrating a fear of an attack on orthodoxy and perhaps pointing to a continuation of Donatism. With the arrival of the Arian Vandals soon after, Donatist and orthodox Christian would have suffered alike because both believed in the consubstantiality of the

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 289.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 290.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 298-9.

Son with the Father in the Trinity.¹²⁰ During the period of Vandal domination and Byzantine reconquest, the Donatists do not appear in any extant sources regarding African history. However, at the end of the sixth century, they reappear in the correspondence of Gregory the Great. He was alarmed by the survival of Donatism in Numidia and in August 596 he dispatched a letter in Emperor Mauricius in Constantinople expressing his concerns.

We do not know if the appeal succeeded, but Christianity in Africa had little time left. The first Arab raiders arrived less than forty years later, and the Berbers were soon won over to Islam.¹²¹ Islam drew its strength from the Moorish occupants of the African interior, much as Donatism had done. In 698, the fall of Carthage marked a decisive victory for the Islamic invaders. While some Christian communities maintained themselves until the eleventh century, they did eventually vanish.¹²²

Traces of Roman domination soon faded away; no romance language survived in North Africa, no Roman institutions were preserved, and Christianity did not survive as it did in other Islamic countries like Egypt and Syria. In the end, neither Donatism nor orthodox Christianity prevailed. Instead, Islam arrived in Africa with little opposition, great strength, and considerable toleration for oppressed peoples. It found its strength in the lower classes and in the same geographical regions of Donatism. So if the Donatist schism helped pave the way for the absorption of Christianity by

¹²⁰ Bonner, *St. Augustine*, 274.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 274.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 275.

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Islam, then Donatism was part of a larger social revolution with roots in the lower classes that helped divide Rome from Carthage.¹²³

¹²³ Frend, *Donatist Church*, 336.

Wag or Be Wagged: The Chechen Wars and the Manipulation of the Russian Presidency

James B. Hooper

1999 was a critical year in modern Russian history. Plagued by political and economic uncertainty after the collapse of Soviet communism, Russians seemed to long for a leader who could bring stability. Vladimir Putin's overwhelming election to the head of the young Russian democracy signified the dawn of a new era in Russian politics. Putin's brand of authoritarian pragmatism has produced an economically encouraging Russia, with relative domestic stability and increasing influence in the realm of global politics. However, Putin's stable Russia has been regularly threatened by a brutal domestic conflict that continues to claim lives and consume the resources of the Russian military. Since 1999, the renewal of a bloody war of attrition with the tiny republic of Chechnya has threatened the existence of the Chechens as a people and the Russians as a re-emerging international power. More importantly, the protracted Chechen conflict has had major implications for the role of the president in the new Russian political order, and in the first ten years of the position's existence, the manner in which the president has conducted his Caucasus policy has been the primary driver of his efficacy as chief executive.

When Boris Yeltsin was elected president of the newly founded Russian Federation in 1991, his role was largely undefined. As the first popularly elected head of state in Russian history, and with an ambigu-

ous constitution giving him the opportunity to exercise a great deal of authority, it was up to Yeltsin to set the precedent for his position. Because of a loosely defined constitutional relationship between the executive and legislative branches and a complete lack of precedents, the president and Congress continually butted heads for most of 1992 and 1993. They refused to pass Yeltsin's dramatic economic reforms, and rejected many of his executive appointments. Yeltsin attempted to clear up this constitutional relationship by submitting a referendum on presidential powers to the Congress in March 1993.¹ They not only refused to pass it, but the Congress attempted to impeach Yeltsin in response.²

After the unsuccessful impeachment attempt, the Congress and Yeltsin spent five months in effective stalemate, and few reforms passed. The conflict over economic reform and the untested nature of executive-legislative interaction were the main reasons why the two bodies failed to work together.³ During the summer of 1993, both the Congress and President Yeltsin drafted secret plans to dissolve the other; but the president acted first.⁴ On 12 September 1993, Yeltsin suspended the Congress and announced his plans for an elected bicameral Federal Assembly. In an emergency session, the Congress attempted to counter Yeltsin's attack, but he had the legislative building surrounded by Russian military and police forces. A standoff lasted until October 4, when Yeltsin ordered

¹ "Russia.," In CountryWatch [database online], Santa Clara University 12 February 2005.

² Ibid.

³ Michael McFaul, *Unfinished Revolution: Political Change from Gorbachev to Putin*, (Cornell University Press, 2001), 31.

⁴ Ibid. 32.

the military to force out the legislators. After a short but deadly conflict, pro-Yeltsin forces claimed control of the nation.⁵

The new constitution drafted primarily by Yeltsin's political aides was ratified by popular vote in December 1993.⁶ The new constitution was designed with the express purpose of eliminating the mechanisms that had allowed the stagnant political conditions of the previous year.⁷ It accomplished this, not surprisingly, by expanding the power of the executive branch.⁸ In addition, Yeltsin's new constitution watered down the potency of judicial authority by increasing the number of judges in the Constitutional Court and strengthened the Federation by leaving no provisions for regional secession. In this bold move of executive bravado, Yeltsin succeeded overwhelmingly in strengthening his position, if only temporarily.⁹ He was able to pull off this dramatic power consolidation primarily because of the favor he enjoyed with the political and economic elites of the era. In administering the transfer from a state-owned economic infrastructure to a system of increased privatization, Yeltsin had been able to create the class of elites that emerged in post-communist Russia. For that, he was rewarded with significant political capital, and a fair amount of authority in implementing his desired reforms. According to Carnegie scholar Andrei Ryabov, Yeltsin created a "feudal" system of oligarchic special inter-

⁵ "Russia," CountryWatch.

⁶ McFaul, *Unfinished Revolution*, 210.

⁷ In addition, the people elected the members of a 450 member lower house, the State Duma, and a 178 member upper house, the Federal Council.

⁸ McFaul, *Unfinished Revolution*, 211.

⁹ *Ibid.* 212.

ests. "Lacking solid resources to retain his power, he had to buttress it by delegating actual authority to the largest interest groups in exchange for their loyalty."¹⁰ Subsequently, some of the most powerful people in Moscow were not the politicians, but those in control of the natural gas industry, the leaders of the electricity monopoly and the railways, and the young entrepreneurs dominating the Russian financial market.¹¹

After rewriting the constitution, Yeltsin was able to implement more of his economic program. However, the collapse of the ruble in 1994 had a deleterious effect on the realization of any economic gain that may have come about as a result of his reforms. Furthermore, his authority was continually compromised by the political deterioration of Chechnya, the tiny Islamic republic in the North Caucasus that Moscow had been unable to control since the late 1980s. With the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, his sweeping reforms of the Soviet state and the subsequent dissolution of the USSR, the Chechens saw an opportunity to throw off the yoke of Russian imperial dominance, which had suffocated them for centuries.¹² The Chechens had continu

¹⁰ Andrei Ryabov, "The Presidential Elections and the Evolution of Russia's Political System," *Russian Domestic Politics and Political Institutions*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Vol. 2 no. 2 February 2000: 3.

¹¹ Peter Rutland, "Putin and the Oligarchs," *The Dynamics of Russian Politics: Putin's Reform of Federal-Regional Relations* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 134-5.

¹² The continuity of conflict began in the eighteenth century, when cavalrymen sent by Peter the Great were soundly defeated in an attempt to suppress resistance to Russian rule. Later in the same century, a popular Sufi cleric, Sheikh Mansur, declared a holy war against impious Muslims and Russians alike who he saw as a threat to the sanctity of Islam. A more protracted engagement began in 1816, when General Alexei Yermolov was appointed as the Russian

Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus. He adopted an aggressive strategy toward the Chechens, viewed by most Russian policymakers as 'bandits' (a term which is still commonly used in reference to the Chechens). Yermolov's ruthless tactics aimed at stopping Chechen raids into Russian territory resulted in complete control of the regional tribes. But, they also sparked organized resistance among the Chechens and inspired the rise of Chechnya's most beloved folk hero, Imam Shamil, who controlled the resistance beginning in 1832. Shamil managed to engage the Russian forces for over 30 years, leading Chechen forces who committed their lives to the cause of the war.

During the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chechens fought on the side of the Bolshevik Red Army, taking the opportunity to punish the pro-tsarist Whites and hoping to gain independence at the end of the conflict. From 1917 to 1920, intense fighting in the North Caucasus continued to be a significant distraction for the White Army and helped contribute to their ultimate defeat. Though the Chechens rose up against the Red Army in August 1920 when they realized that they would not be granted national independence, the rebels were defeated and subsumed in the formation of the Soviet Union.

Under their new Soviet occupiers, the Chechens refused absolutely to participate in the programs of Lenin and Stalin, rejecting the affirmative action policies aimed at fostering nationalism in the ethnic republics, as well as the collectivization procedures which began to be implemented in the late 1920s. In 1929, tens of thousands of Soviet troops were sent to crush the guerrilla resistance, and the conflict continued sporadically through the late 1930s. By 1943 Stalin was ready to get rid of his Chechen problem. Accusing them, incorrectly, of collaborating with the Nazis, Stalin ordered the deportation of the Chechens, Ingush, Karachai, Balkars, Meskhetian Turks, and Crimean Tatars from the North Caucasus. 478,479 Chechens and Ingush were deported from the North Caucasus to Kazakhstan, and 78,000 died en route or in the first harsh Kazakh winter. The Chechens and Ingush were thus officially removed from existence in the Soviet records, and their lands were divided and absorbed into the boundaries of neighboring countries. Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Russians were imported to inhabit the deserted cities and villages. No mention was made of the deportation in Soviet media for two years after the event. In 1956, Stalin's successor Nikita Khrushchev officially condemned the deportation, and re-introduced the Checheno-Ingushetian republic.

ally clashed with Russians—from Peter the Great to Stalin—who sought to bring the Caucasus under their control. Armed conflict was a regular occurrence over the three centuries preceding the modern wars. The Chechens were actually deported for thirteen years under Stalin as punishment for their resistance to Soviet reforms. When Gorbachev's reforms began to reach the Chechens in 1989, the concept of *glasnost* brought about a turbulent atmosphere of political activism. By mid-1989, young Chechen activists had formed the first political organization in the republic, and activists throughout the Caucasus republics began meetings in discussion of the possibility of a “federal statehood of the peoples of the Caucasus.”¹³ When the Russian Federation was created, the

The displaced Chechens returned en masse, after 12 years of resilience in the inhospitable plains of Central Asia.

The lasting effect of the deportation on the psyche of the Chechens cannot be underemphasized. Their return home proved their unwavering fortitude as a people, and showed that they would never be controlled without a fight. In fact, more Chechens returned than had been deported, as a result of their “ethnic solidarity and kinship-based mutual support, sheer determination to survive and a very high birth rate.” The deportations not only strengthened the solidarity of the Chechen identity and steeled their temperament against the Russian state, but it confirmed all of their previous suspicions about the Russians, and gave them physical, historical proof of the Russians designs against them. The Chechens returned to a hostile crowd of non-Chechen squatters deeply resented the repatriation of the deportees. Intercultural violence became common, but mostly through individual skirmishes and a few mob riots. By the 1970s, most of the imported Slavs had been pushed out of their temporary homes, the violence had subsided, and the Chechens established their participation in the semi-modernized state.

¹³ Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power* (Yale, 1998), 89-90.

Chechens organized behind the leadership of retired Soviet air force major general Dzhokhar Dudayev and declared themselves an independent nation. Consumed by his own battle to control the collapsing Soviet Union and preserve the new Federation, Yeltsin failed to successfully intervene, and the Chechen separatists were awarded de facto independence until he could muster up enough military and political might to renew the conflict.

Over the period from the Russian withdrawal to the invasion in December of 1994, the dysfunctional Chechen economy was not improving, unemployment hovered around forty percent, and the expansion of the criminal entrepreneurial sector provided at least adequate grounds to justify Russian intervention.¹⁴ Furthermore, Yeltsin refused to meet with Dudayev to discuss a resolution. Viewing the Chechen leader as head of a “criminal regime” and relying too heavily on a close-knit cadre of manipulative hawks, Yeltsin neglected the importance of diplomacy in resolving the conflict. Dudayev was guilty of the same level of neglect, due primarily to his political inexperience and the lack of organization within his cabinet and parliament.¹⁵

Spurred by the conclusion of a similar standoff in

¹⁴ Matthew Evangelista, *The Chechen Wars: Will Russia go the Way of the Soviet Union?* (Brookings, 2002), 21.

¹⁵ Gail Lapidus, “The War in Chechnya: Opportunities Missed, Lessons to be Learned,” in *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventative Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World*, Bruce Jentleson, ed. (Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 2000), 45-6.

the Central Asian region of Tatarstan,¹⁶ in the interest of protecting valuable oil reserves and pipelines in the Caspian region and at the behest of aggressive hawks in his cabinet, Yeltsin authorized covert operations in support of anti-Dudayev forces within Chechnya in November 1994. The operations proved to be a total failure on a number of levels. Dudayev's national army routed the opposition, taking over half of the tanks by seizure or destruction and capturing a handful of Russian officers as prisoners of war. While the Russian Defense Minister in Moscow denied any involvement in the attempted coup, the Chechen government blatantly displayed images of the POWs live on television.¹⁷ Still believing that a "bloodless blitzkrieg" could shock and awe the tiny republic into submission within days,¹⁸ Yeltsin organized a secret security council on November 29 to coordinate a full-scale bombardment of Grozny and the deployment of 40,000 troops to the Chechen border.¹⁹ Public comments made by Moscow policymakers estimated the length of a successful invasion to be anywhere from two hours to two weeks.²⁰ The invasion and bombardment were undertaken on 11 December 1994, in order

¹⁶ Tatarstan had, since the fall of the USSR, been attempting to negotiate its independence from Moscow. Though its aim was the same, Tatarstan's "conflict" differs fundamentally from the Chechens' because it was resolved with diplomacy. Moscow managed to negotiate peace with Tatarstan and it remained part of the Russian Federation. After settling this dispute, Chechnya remained a last major piece of business carried over from the transition from USSR to RF.

¹⁷ Lapidus, in "Opportunities," 47.

¹⁸ Ibid. 48.

¹⁹ Carlotta Gall and Thomas de Waal, *Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus* (NYU, 1998), 163.

²⁰ Ibid.

to defend and restore “Russia’s unity.”²¹ Yeltsin hoped to use a brief conflict and resounding victory to boost his approval rating, which had been slipping in previous months. However, the bombardment quickly became a gruesome quagmire.²² For the first time, the Russian media played a critical role in debunking the spin of the Moscow political machine, who continued to report decisive tactical victories and low casualties in the wake of just the opposite.²³

As the war dragged on through 1995, it became one of the most ruthless, brutal and inhumane conflicts in recent memory. The Chechen forces, only 2,000 at the onset of the war and mainly consisting of untrained civilians, were able to engage a Russian deployment that reached at least 20 times its size. The Russian forces, experiencing low morale, poor leadership and inadequate armaments, continued to be ineffective in suppressing the mainly guerrilla forces that made up the Chechen resistance.²⁴ The war’s completely

²¹ Lieven, *Tombstone*, 84.

²² Many in the Russian army were outraged at the invasion’s poor planning, and the poor justification for it. The official justification—“defending Russia’s unity”—did not allay the claims of critics who cited the geopolitics of oil and political maneuvering as the “real” motivations for war. In fact, according to Anatol Lieven, 557 Russian military men, from all levels, were disciplined, dismissed, or deserted in protest of the invasion (Evangelista 38).

²³ Lapidus, in “Opportunities,” 48-9.

²⁴ The war’s particularly brutal nature was experienced both in Chechnya and in Russia proper. In June 1995 Chechen commander Shamil Basayev’s forces entered a hospital in the Russian town of Budennovsk, and took over a thousand patients and hospital workers hostage. Basayev’s raid was intended to spark peace with Moscow. Yeltsin was out of the country at a conference in Canada, and deferred responsibility for handling the crisis to his Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. After a

devastating nature can be summarized by the fact that the Russian leaders began to view the ethnic Chechen population—not just the rebel forces—as the enemy. They used “filtration camps,” where any suspected rebels were rounded up, interrogated, tortured and often never returned. All told, the war produced over 100,000 casualties and forced over 400,000 native Chechens to flee into refugee camps in neighboring Dagestan and Georgia.²⁵

Afraid of being held accountable for the disaster that continued to take lives within Russia’s borders, Yeltsin began to discuss the prospects for negotiated peace in hopes of winning re-election in the spring of 1996.²⁶ Yeltsin recognized the importance of appeasing his electoral constituency, and adjusted his policies accordingly. Although he did occasionally restrict media access and censor the press’s freedom, for the most part, the critical media’s voice was heard. Where previously, rulers like Stalin used state-controlled media to “erase” any threats to his authority overnight, the emergence of a critical and mostly free press meant that Yeltsin would be held accountable for his actions.

On April 22, the Russian Army successfully assassinated Dzhokhar Dudayev with a missile directed to the signal coming from his satellite telephone. The removal of Dudayev from power gave Yeltsin a more

failed attempt to storm the hospital resulted in over a hundred deaths, Chernomyrdin agreed to grant the rebels safe passage to Chechnya in exchange for the hostages. This disaster intensified widespread criticism of Yeltsin’s handling of the entire war, and has been cited as a turning point in the first war (Evangelista 40).

²⁵ Lapidus, in “Opportunities,” n.39, 49.

²⁶ Ibid. 49.

consistent leader to deal with, as Aslan Maskhadov was appointed commander of the armed forces. However, Yeltsin's commitment to peace in Chechnya seemed only to be a meaningless campaign promise; after successfully reclaiming his presidential post, he failed to withdraw the troops he vowed to relieve. After his reelection, the Russian forces resumed their ground offensives, inflicting civilian casualties in the mountain villages thought to be headquarters for key Chechen leaders.²⁷ Just as the conflict seemed to spiral out of control, a surprise attack on the eve of Yeltsin's inauguration changed the tide of the war. Maskhadov and a force of just 1,500 Chechens stormed the capital, held by no less than 12,000 Russians, and decisively defeated the unsuspecting occupiers. After subsequent bombardment, Yeltsin saw the reality of the exhausted conflict; and he authorized newly appointed secretary of the Security Council, Alexander Lebed, to negotiate peace with Maskhadov.²⁸

The resulting Khasavyurt Peace Agreement negotiated by the two diplomats was signed on 31 August 1996. The accord required that Russia withdraw all its troops from Chechnya, and that it officially recognize Chechnya's internal government.²⁹ Subsequently, Maskhadov was elected president of a semi-autonomous Chechnya. The second set of negotiations, carried out by Maskhadov's government in May of 1997, "On Peace and the Principles of Relations between the Russian Federation and the Chechen

²⁷ Evangelista 43.

²⁸ Ibid. 44.

²⁹ Anatol Lieven, "Nightmare in the Caucasus," *Washington Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (2000): 46.

Republic of Ichkeria,” deferred responsibility to draft an explicit solution until 2001. For the time, the Chechens were again given *de facto* independence.

Yeltsin’s popularity declined severely almost immediately following his reelection primarily due to widespread rumors of corruption in his cabinet and among his political supporters. The tools he had used to strengthen his political base through his commitment to special interests came back to haunt him. As Ryabov explains, “though fairly stable, such a system has been inefficient in terms of addressing wider national tasks and meeting new challenges.”³⁰ Although the system of exchanging rewards for political support gave Yeltsin his power in the early years of his government, it ultimately caused his demise. Faced with deep-seated economic crises and deteriorating health, he continued to defer responsibility to his ministers, and was at the beck and call of his elite supporters. Characterized by conflicts with the Federal Assembly over prime minister appointments, constant cabinet reshuffling, numerous heart attacks and other serious health issues, Yeltsin’s second term was a disaster

In Chechnya, after the departure of Russian forces in 1996, little had changed. As a leader, Maskhadov was unable to convert the energy of revolution and nationalism into organized state institutions. Although citizens in Grozny could live without fear of aerial bombardment, most of the governmental infrastructure remained debilitated, gainful employment opportunities were scarce and the most promising opportunities were in crime and banditry. Throughout the peace period, Yeltsin’s government was unable to

³⁰ Ryabov, “Elections,” 3.

develop a strategy for dealing with the Chechens, especially since it was consumed by many of its own problems, including the August 1998 financial crisis. However, chaos within the Chechen borders as a result of Maskhadov's inability to exercise any influence over the organized bandits led to a growing recognition that another conflict was imminent. Numerous border disputes between Islamists and Russians heightened that tension, and by the summer of 1999 the situation re-ignited.³¹

On August 7, 1999, a force of anywhere from 300 to 2,000 radical Islamists marched across the Dagestani border. The soldiers were part of a minority resistance group comprised of Dagestanis and Chechens, along with some Arabs and other foreign Muslims, and their aim was to set up an Islamic state independent from the Russian Federation and Maskhadov's Chechnya. However, they overestimated the popularity of their strict Wahhabi sect in Dagestan, and met local resistance almost immediately. Seeing Wahhabi law as a threat to their own balance of Islam and government, local Dagestani officials appealed to the Russians for military assistance, who responded with relative quickness.³² Only days after the "Quranic puritans" entered Dagestan, newly appointed Prime Minister Vladimir Putin announced that he had been appointed to restore the rule of law to the border republics and that he would resolve the continuing conflict in Dagestan within two weeks.³³ After two weeks of fighting, the rebels had retreated into

³¹ Jacob W. Kipp, "Putin and Russia's Wars in Chechnya," *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, Dale R. Herspring, ed. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 219.

³² Evangelista 63-4.

³³ Ibid. 65.

Chechen villages, which were subsequently shelled by the Russian military.³⁴

Even though the insurgents, led by an enigmatic rebel named Shamil Basayev, represent the views of a minority of Chechens, they have become the predominant face of the Chechen separatist movement, and have had the most potent influence on Moscow's policy. Their mobilizing, anti-Russian ideology, though it has appealed to many of the marginalized youth who see it as "the only discipline that can hold their society together," has not taken hold among the majority of Chechens.³⁵ However, the brutality of the Russians in their pursuit of complete destruction of the Chechen rebels has given Basayev's camp legitimacy in the eyes of the Chechens. The Russians have carried out their operations against the Chechens as a people and not just against the opposition forces, and have used filtration camps, aerial bombardment and torture indiscriminately in both wars.³⁶ The Chechens come from a tradition of family honor and clan loyalty, where blood feuds and grudges between two groups can last generations.³⁷ To the Chechens, the Stalinist deportations and the inhumanity of the wars of the last ten years have sufficiently justified a radical response in the name of national pride. In other words, the Russians themselves have radicalized the Chechen population.

In September 1999 after the rebels had been pushed out of Dagestan, four explosions in Moscow and Dagestan apartment buildings claimed over 300

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Lieven, "Nightmare," 150.

³⁶ Mohammed M. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Lynne Rienner, 2003), 98-9.

³⁷ Kipp, 210.

lives. Before any evidence had even been collected, Chechens had already been convicted for these crimes in the court of public opinion and in the war rooms of the Kremlin.³⁸ No terrorists were ever found, and no group claimed responsibility.³⁹ The nature of the bombings was further called into question when local police in the city of Ryazan discovered a bomb that had been planted by Russian FSB (formerly KGB) security officials. Two days after the incident, the FSB director announced that the agents had planted the bomb as a drill to test the readiness of local police forces, and that the dismantled apparatus contained sugar, not real explosives. Just why the FSB would be engaged in such activities has never been sufficiently explained by security officials or the Kremlin.⁴⁰

Following this bizarre series of events and the Kremlin's insistence on Chechen terrorists' involvement, the Russian public became significantly insecure. Shortly after the explosions, Putin appeared in front of the Duma and the Russian people, stating that his goal was "to defend the population from the bandits."⁴¹ Declaring his intention to wipe out the bandits "in the shitter," Putin's aggressiveness became a source of stability for the Russian people, and his popularity skyrocketed.⁴² Though Putin publicly stated his commitment to negotiate with Maskhadov, he almost immediately called for a full-scale invasion.

³⁸ "New Bombs Won't End Old Conflict," *The Moscow Times*, 22 September 1999.

³⁹ Lilia Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 36.

⁴⁰ Simon Saradzhyan, "There was no Ryazan bomb – it was a test," *The Moscow Times*, 25 September 1999.

⁴¹ *qtd.* in Shevtsova, 37.

⁴² Kipp, 220.

By October, Russian troops had entered Chechnya, and the war had reignited with renewed ruthlessness.

Maskhadov had no choice but to defend his nation. Faced with destruction, the secular separatists joined forces with the Islamists, and attempted to fend off the Russian offensives. In much the same fashion as the first war, the Russian ground forces met stiff resistance as they advanced on Grozny. Just before Christmas, the Russians began an organized attack to retake the Chechen capital, and it fell two months later.⁴³ On New Year's Eve, 1999, Boris Yeltsin made a surprise announcement: he was resigning, effective immediately. Putin was named acting president until the upcoming election. In lieu of his early resignation, the election was moved up to March. Putin's popularity would not have time to erode if victory in Chechnya proved elusive, and his competitors would not have enough time to organize effective campaigns against him. Though Putin's approval rating had been thirty-five percent when Yeltsin appointed him to Prime Minister in August, it had surpassed sixty-five percent by October, and would not drop below sixty percent for the next four years, as he was overwhelmingly elected president in March 2000.^{44,45}

The Russian army was successful in pushing the rebels out of Chechnya's major urban areas within the first two months of 2000. They used heavy-handed tactics to trap the rebels and destroy the Chechen towns. Though they inflicted heavy casualties, they did not squash the resistance as Putin had promised.

⁴³ Kipp, 221.

⁴⁴ Evangelista, 78.

⁴⁵ Richard Rose, <<http://www.russiavotes.org>> Centre for the Study of Public Policy, 20 February 2005.

The increasingly effective rebel forces abandoned the cities, moved into the hills, and focused their energy on insurgency and guerrilla tactics. Through 2004, the state of affairs in Chechnya had changed little. The Russian military, badly in need of dramatic reform and terribly under-funded, performed dismally. Despite their large numbers, dependence on often untrained conscripts, devastatingly low morale and a lack of adequate materials have made the Russian operation a catastrophe. In addition, the rebels became increasingly adept at frustrating the Russians' efforts to secure the region, gaining more and more experience and recruiting more support with the war's continued brutality.⁴⁶ Regular acts of terrorism have been carried out by Basayev's groups throughout Russia proper, taking the lives of many innocent victims. Though the death toll continues to rise, Putin announced the end of the military conflict in 2001, turning what he now called an "anti-terrorist operation" over to the FSB.⁴⁷ Troops have had to remain in Chechnya because of continued raids by the rebels, and no sign of a break on either side—or the imposition of order—seems likely.⁴⁸

After his election to the presidency, Putin wasted no time carrying out some dramatic reforms. Capitalizing on the support garnered from his firm handling of the Chechen crisis, Putin consolidated federal power

⁴⁶ Mark Kramer, Lecture, Stanford University, 11 January 2005.

⁴⁷ Putin has also attempted to endorse Moscow-installed local leaders that could establish some form of order in the region, but all have been largely unsuccessful. The thugs who he has appointed as puppet administrators have been more like organized criminals and executioners than politicians.

⁴⁸ Kipp, 221.

and authority in the Kremlin and deliberately elevated the role of the Russian executive branch. His primary reforms have weakened regional governors and local leaders in favor of more control in the center, disciplined the “oligarchs” to reassert his executive authority and muzzled the media insofar as it has been critical of his policies. These accomplishments have effectively made the Russian political system more vertical and have had a strong stabilizing effect on the nation as a whole, but have reversed many of the pluralistic reforms of the 1990s. Their success has been completely dependent on Putin’s manipulation of the conflict in Chechnya.

Although initially regarded as a puppet to the interests of Yeltsin’s corrupt “family” of special interests, Putin quickly demonstrated that he would not be anyone’s pawn by carrying out major reforms within months of his inauguration. In May 2000, Putin presented a decree establishing seven federal administrative regions within the Russian Federation that would subsequently control the 89 individual regions. These seven “super-regions”—corresponding directly with the administrative districts within the Russian military—would be run by Putin appointees, and five out of seven came from the “power ministries”: the FSB, police forces, and the military. According to Nikolai Petrov and Darrel Slider, the main motive behind this move seems to have been Putin’s desire to “take away or circumscribe most powers exercised by regional leaders. His goal appears to be to establish a unitary state under the guise of ‘restoring effective vertical power to the country,’ to use Putin’s own

description of his intentions.”⁴⁹

Under Yeltsin, a system of federalism had emerged, with each of the 89 regions gaining some authority comparable to America’s states with the creation of the Federation Council in 1993. For the first time, regions were given veto power over the congress, as a bicameral legislative system was implemented. The Federation Council members were primarily regional governors who were given immunity from criminal prosecution, could not be unilaterally removed by the president and were chosen by popular election beginning in 1996. Although intended by Yeltsin to bolster his political power for the 1996 election, these reforms effectively strengthened the regions’ sway over federal policies, undermining Yeltsin’s ability to govern.⁵⁰

Putin’s establishment of the “super-regions” was just one way of reclaiming central control over the regions. Putin has also gutted the power of the Federation Council members by changing the way its members were chosen. He prohibited regional governors from serving as council members, initiated laws that gave the president the right to single-handedly dismiss regional governors and governments and composed a new tax code that shifted to Moscow greater responsibility in the distribution of tax revenues. By creating a buffer between regional executives and federal congresspersons, Putin was able to rein in the legislature and gain its cooperation. Moreover, the limitations Putin placed on regional governors allowed him to remove many of his opponents from office, subduing

⁴⁹ Nikolai Petrov and Darrell Slider, “Putin and the Regions,” in *Putin’s Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, Dale R. Herspring, ed. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 238.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 241-2.

those regional governors who had flourished under Yeltsin's brand of political favoritism. Once disallowed from participation in the Federation Council, the regional executives lost their immunity from criminal prosecution. Using his FSB connections to gather compromising evidence against these regional governors, Putin has prosecuted unruly governors or "dissuaded" them from seeking office again, and has also used the power ministries to sabotage political campaigns.⁵¹ As a result of these strong-arm tactics, by the end of 2003 over one-third of all regional heads had been replaced under Putin.⁵²

These strategies have been absolutely crucial in tightening Putin's grip on the Russian government and would have been completely unacceptable without the destabilizing presence of the Chechen conflict lingering within Russia's borders. Putin's primary justification for his centralizing decrees has been "to restore the preeminence of federal law" and to affirm and "define the division of powers between the center, regions, and local government."⁵³ These assertions unabashedly echo the earlier claims of Yeltsin when he entered Chechnya in 1994 to restore constitutional authority and defend Russia's unity. The regions were continually destabilized throughout the 1990s, with Chechnya being the most extreme example of this instability. Without the ability to constantly cite Chechnya as an example of Russia's failure to maintain or-

⁵¹ Ibid. 248-50. The authors describe situations where opposition candidates have been extra-judicially removed from ballots only days before the election, and others where political enemies are assuaged by being appointed to various "cushy" government posts (250).

⁵² Ibid. 249.

⁵³ Ibid. 248.

der—especially in the border regions—Putin would not have enjoyed the public’s overwhelming support throughout these first reforms.

Putin’s pursuit of the oligarchs and his chokehold on the media cannot be viewed independently. As mentioned earlier, the class of entrepreneurs known as oligarchs that emerged under the transition to privatization wielded significant sway over Yeltsin. Similar to his relationship with regional governors, Yeltsin granted favors to the oligarchs who controlled the country’s economy in exchange for political support. In many cases, the people who controlled the largest economic conglomerates additionally created media companies that gave them invaluable influence over public opinion, their lack of financial success notwithstanding. By the mid-1990s, the owners and editorial policy advisers of the burgeoning “independent” media also owned the most powerful investment firms, ran the largest oil companies and directed Russia’s largest banks.⁵⁴ Because of their considerable influence in the newly formed independent media, these young entrepreneurs could offer Yeltsin much in the way of political capital. These same moguls manipulated and dictated the policies of the Kremlin and funded and supported Yeltsin’s bid for reelection in 1996.⁵⁵

In the first Chechen war, the new critical media, despite its electoral support for Yeltsin, played a paramount role in forcing Yeltsin to negotiate peace with Maskhadov. Journalists from around the world and within Russia itself had free reign in Chechnya,

⁵⁴ Rutland, 163.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 161; see also Masha Lipman and Michael McFaul, “Putin and the Media,” in *Putin’s Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, Dale R. Herspring, ed. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 50.

and their access led to vitriolic criticism of the Kremlin and the military, often championing the cause of the resilient rebels. In response to a devastatingly low public approval rating as the 1996 election approached, Yeltsin made a number of overtures toward peace, including ceasefires and promises to bring the troops home. Although he temporarily renewed the attacks after winning the presidency, the continued criticism by the media highlighted the bankrupt campaign of the Russian military. Those television stations and print media that were most critical of the Russian campaign became ratings leaders, and developed strong commitments to professionalism, integrity, and accuracy in their reporting.⁵⁶

The two most successful oligarchs-turned-media magnates were Vladimir Gusinsky and Boris Berezovsky, and they were the primary victims in Putin's battle for vertical control. They owned Russia's most prominent independent television and radio stations and print media. Because of their position at the front of the elite pack that controlled the media and the economy as well as their public opposition to his administration, Gusinsky and Berezovsky were targeted by Putin and deliberately taken down shortly after his election. Putin invoked obscure legal loopholes, used financial leverage possessed by state-controlled conglomerates and utilized the power ministries to threaten and coerce compliance from these media groups, either forcing stations to go off the air or taking control of the leadership in these groups and "encouraging" a softer editorial line.⁵⁷ Often, when the Kremlin would get control of a TV station or

⁵⁶ Lipman and McFaul, 58.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 65-6.

newsmagazine, they would simply replace the content with sports coverage. Within a year of his election, Putin had succeeded. Although regional stations still maintained more objective criticism of Russian politics, on a national level there was not much dissent against the president.⁵⁸

Although Putin's attacks on the free press did not go without protest,⁵⁹ the Russian public seemed largely unconcerned. According to nationwide surveys, only fifteen percent of Russians believed that Gusinsky was persecuted in order to prevent criticism, only seven percent saw the closure of Berezovsky's TV-6 as a direct result of Putin's intervention⁶⁰ and "only four percent of the public [regarded] the NTV takeover as a state attempt to limit media freedom."⁶¹ In addition, in October 2003, fifty-three percent of Russians held this statement as their personal view: "The authorities are in no way threatening free speech, and are not squeezing out independent media."⁶² The seeming lack of concern among Russians for Putin's subjugation of the media can only be explained by recognizing the high degree of instability and fear in Russian society brought on by the Chechen war. The same dedicated audience that brought NTV to the height of popularity and demanded an independent and critical media during the first war now looked on, disinterested, as that same media was crushed. The lack of public

⁵⁸ Ibid. 63.

⁵⁹ Demonstrations against the closure of Gusinsky's NTV drew over 10,000 in Moscow, and both Boris Yeltsin and the Bush administration made public statements exhorting the Kremlin to keep TV-6 on the air (Lipman and McFaul 63, 65).

⁶⁰ Rose, <www.russiavotes.org>.

⁶¹ qtd. in Lipman and McFaul, 63.

⁶² Rose, <www.russiavotes.org>.

dialogue over the second war is a sad phenomenon, and is a testimony to the Russians' collective insecurity.

In Putin's quest for a monotone media environment, he has continually used the war in Chechnya as justification for his actions. In the early months of the war, Russian security services arrested Radio Liberty correspondent Andrei Babitsky in Chechnya and held him for over a month. When asked about the reporter's whereabouts, Putin alleged that Babitsky "worked directly for the enemy—for the bandits."⁶³ He claimed that Babitsky was supplying the Chechens with maps of Russian military checkpoints and giving them advice on how to get around them.⁶⁴ Putin's administration has disallowed unaccredited journalists from entering Chechnya and has only handed out accreditations to Kremlin loyalists. Those who have reported critically from Chechnya have been intimidated, poisoned, arrested or at the very least have had their accreditations revoked. Although Putin has rarely made public statements indicating that he has knowledge or complicity in these actions, he has justified the silencing of critical journalists by deeming their reports sensational and unpatriotic.⁶⁵

By attacking the oligarchs through their media

⁶³ qtd. in Lipman and McFaul, 62.

⁶⁴ Vladimir Putin, with Natalia Gevorkyan, Andrei Kolesnikov, and Natalya Timakova, *First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait*, Catherine A. Fitzpatrick, trans. (Public Affairs, 2000), 172-3.

⁶⁵ Anna Politkovskaya, "Russian Journalist Anna Politkovskaya, Poisoned," 09 September 2004, <<http://penusa.org/go/home>> 25 February 2005. In 2002, Putin ridiculed NTV for its coverage of the Moscow theater hostage crisis, calling it "sensationalism" designed to boost the station's ratings (Lipman and McFaul, 67).

holdings, Putin has achieved a dual victory, and he has been able to do so as a result of the national sentiment that he stirred-up by invading Chechnya. Playing on the popularity of a renewed conflict with the Chechen separatists and using the widespread fears among the Russian people to bolster his political base, Putin rode to reform on his image as an aggressive pragmatist. Although he did suffer a ten percent popularity drop when his attacks on Gusinsky, the media and the regions were made public, his support base was so large that he even then maintained the favor of over sixty percent of the Russian electorate.⁶⁶

When the Soviet Union disbanded, Russia's reformers had the power to set the precedents that would determine Russia's role in the redefined global political environment. Boris Yeltsin faced the challenge of balancing the untested principles of democracy and managing the economy and infrastructure of what was still the world's largest nation. While in 1993 he sought to strengthen the potency of the executive branch to gain more freedom to implement economic reform, he insisted on having his new constitution approved by a referendum of the Russian people. Rather than forcing it by decree, Yeltsin was committed to passing the constitution using democratic methods to give it added legitimacy.⁶⁷ Although he would not always abide by or fully conform to the rules of democracy, Yeltsin showed a commitment to maintaining at least the basic forms of a democratic nation.

While consumed by his efforts to stabilize Russia proper, Yeltsin allowed the renegade Chechen republic to become continually less stable. His refusal to

⁶⁶ Rose, <www.russiavotes.org>.

⁶⁷ McFaul, *Unfinished Revolution*, 215.

negotiate with Dudayev's government, the influence of his cadre of hawks and his desire to use a quick decisive victory to bolster his public approval rating all led to the mistaken military deployment to Chechnya. Yeltsin hoped that he could benefit from engaging the Chechen military and restoring the "constitutional integrity" of the Russian Federation, but the exact opposite happened. After more than a year of devastating military defeats and unrelenting criticism from the press, the prospects for Yeltsin's wag-the-dog victory in the Caucasus were about nil. Recognizing the importance of the upcoming elections, the rising political stock of his communist opposition and his dreadfully low approval rating, Yeltsin began to make efforts to find peace with the Chechens.

On one hand, Yeltsin finally did manipulate the war to successfully augment his popularity with the public. He clearly had no intention of honoring the cease-fires negotiated under the banner of his reelection campaign, as he renewed fighting soon after his election. So, a year and a half later, Yeltsin got his public relations military victory. On the other hand, however, Yeltsin's administration truly had become a victim of his failed Chechen War. Within a month of the original invasion, only sixteen percent of Russians supported the use of force in Chechnya.⁶⁸ What started as a dramatic and grandiose attempt to reassert his executive authority became a domestic tragedy the likes of which had not been seen for decades and one which remains a blight on the body politic of the Russian

⁶⁸ McFaul, *Unfinished Revolution*, 258.

Federation.⁶⁹

Putin's experience in Chechnya would differ greatly from Yeltsin's. Whereas Yeltsin sought unsuccessfully to use an invasion to gain political support, Putin successfully used Russians' sense of insecurity to

⁶⁹ From the very beginning, Yeltsin was constantly scrambling to get out from under the conflict's tremendous shadow. When the covert operations designed to take down Dudayev failed and Russian military hostages were paraded on the news, his military was left with its foot in its mouth. When his promise of a quick military campaign proved impossible, his approval rating slid even lower. Yeltsin often lied quite blatantly in public statements about the war, further eroding the Russian people's trust in him (Evangelista, 39). When his prime minister had to negotiate the Budennovsk hostage crisis, Russians grew even more doubtful that Yeltsin could manage the country or the war. Following that incident, Yeltsin's opposition in the Duma passed a vote of no confidence in the government. Only by a dramatic second vote was the decision overturned and Yeltsin's administration able to retain control. Until the Khasavyurt Peace was signed, the Chechen conflict was perhaps the biggest threat to the security and stability of Yeltsin's government (McFaul, *Unfinished Revolution*, 260-1).

Ultimately, Yeltsin's involvement in Chechnya became a thorn in his side, a burden from which he was always trying to escape. Interestingly, Yeltsin's aforementioned commitment to democratic forms can be credited with ending the First Chechen War. Throughout the entire ordeal, media presence in the region increased significantly and became increasingly critical of Yeltsin's government. Indeed, it was this conflict that gave rise to the independent media that has since been suppressed under Putin. Though the growing media presence had a strong impact on Yeltsin's low approval rating, he resorted to acts of extra-judicial sabotage. He knew the importance of supporting legitimate democratic structures, and—though he occasionally crossed the line to hush the opposition—he gave the press freedom of expression sufficient enough to make an impact on the operations of the government (Shevtsova, "Power and Leadership in Putin's Russia," *Russia After the Fall*, Andrew C. Kuchins, ed. (Carnegie, 2002), 68).

create a national diversion, jumpstart his political career and undermine regional autonomy and the strength of the independent press. Recognizing the traits of the Yeltsin-state that contributed to its weaknesses and ineffectual policies, Putin attempted to build on the Chechen engagement to centralize his regime and forestall any challenge to his authority. While Yeltsin's system of "oligarchic feudalism" had made him a pawn to those political players who had helped keep him in power, Putin engaged in a campaign of selective persecution that showed those power-brokers that he would not be manipulated against his will. Yeltsin was a slave to the interests of the oligarchs and the regional barons; Putin used his ties to the security services to make sure that political elites would be subservient to him. Yeltsin's respect for a democracy in form (if not in substance) meant that he occasionally pandered to the demands of a highly critical independent media, especially around elections. By restricting the national media, Putin has again used the environment of war for his benefit by eliminating that critical voice, and his approval rating has hardly wavered since.

For centuries, the mentality of war has been used as a fog of opportunity for despots and demagogues hoping to further repressive agendas or fill the national coffers. Though desperate times call for desperate measures, wars have often been used as an excuse to achieve unrelated political ends. Disturbingly common was the dog tactics used to distract the public from politicians' ulterior motives have historically been effective and have escaped condemnation. Citizens have been willing to allow atrocities and injustice in exchange for national security and economic stability.

Putin's formula for political stability—a prime example of this scenario—has been successful, and his regime has been the strongest Russia has seen in years. It will be interesting to see, however, how long a regime founded on manipulation and opportunism can survive, and at what cost to those who agreed to look the other way for the sake of stability.

Elusive Matriarchy: The Impact of the Native American and Feminist Movements on Navajo Gender Dynamics

Holly Kearl

Contact with European invaders impacted all Native Americans. From the introduction of new items through trade, to fatal diseases, intermarriage, community relocation and forced “civilizing,” Native American lives would never be the same. The Navajo, or Diné, a name they also call themselves, were able to avoid many of these problems longer than other tribes, helping make them one of the largest tribes in the United States today. Although their population has fared relatively well, forced assimilation by the United States government, specifically during the 1920s and 1930s, affected many aspects of Navajo life, including gender dynamics. The outcome of the changes from assimilation made women more economically and politically dependent on men than they had been previously. Before assimilation, women and men were able to equally contribute to the family income and, as a matriarchal society, women played a significant social and political role, but the assimilation program in the United States reduced women’s economic and political status. During the 1960s and 1970s there was a nation-wide movement of Native American people for self-determination, cultural pride and a renewal of traditional ways, which may have meant a re-emphasis of matriarchy among the Navajo. However, it turned out that the Native American Movement had little impact among the Navajo. Instead, it was the contemporary Feminist Movement that had a greater,

if indirect, impact on the gender dynamics by providing women with more economic opportunities. Politically, the former matriarchal structure has remained elusive, as males dominate the governing tribal council.

I. Pre-Assimilation

Two main periods of contact between the Navajo and non-Native peoples occurred. Between the mid-1600s and early 1800s the Navajo had sporadic interactions with the Spanish, and, from the mid-1800s on, they experienced growing contact with Americans. The Spaniards did not try on a wide scale to “tame” or “civilize” the Navajo peoples, nor were they successful in their limited attempts. The significant ways the Navajo changed through contact with the Spanish were indirect and assimilation did not occur until Euro-Americans enforced it in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century.

Anthropological studies indicate that the Navajo migrated to the Southwestern part of the United States between 1100 and 1500 C.E from as far north as Canada.¹ Some characteristics that are similar to their northern Athabascan relatives are their language, flexibility in adapting to new situations, high status of women, optimistic outlook and value of individualism.² The Navajo were originally hunter-gatherers, organized

¹ Cheryl Howard, *Navajo Tribal Demography, 1983-1986, A Comparative and Historical Perspective* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc: 1993), 7; see also Robin Langley Somner, *North American Indian Women* (Greenwich, CT: Brompton Books, 1998), 9.

² Peter Iverson, *Dine A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 19.

into small groups, with patrilineal descent.³ In the Southwest, their lifestyle greatly changed because of the influence of neighboring people, specifically the Spanish and the neighboring Pueblo tribe.

Spanish records show that there was contact with the Navajo as early as the 1620s. Over the next two hundred years, various missionaries recorded their largely fruitless efforts to convert the Navajo to Christianity.⁴ As the Navajo were a migrant people scattered across a large area, it was difficult for the Spanish to directly influence them as a group. When they did encounter each other, the Navajo did not experience the significant population decline that many other tribes did with European contact because they lived in remote areas in small groups, their diet was rich in protein and they migrated regularly, reducing their chances of catching or spread a disease.⁵ The main type of contact the Navajo had with the Spanish was through raids. For two hundred years, the Navajo raided back and forth with the Spanish (and neighboring tribes like the Utes, Apaches, and Pueblos).⁶

³ Howard, 7; see also Wendell H. Oswalt, "The Navajos: Transformation among a Desert People," in *This Land was Theirs, A Study of Native Americans, Seventh Edition* (Boston: McGraw-Hill Mayfield, 2002), 328.

⁴ Florence H. Ellis, *Navajo Indians I: An Anthropological Study of the Navajo Indians* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 21; see also Bertha P. Dutton, *American Indians of the Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 68.

⁵ Howard, 4-5.

⁶ Rose Mitchell, *Tall Woman, The Life and Story of Rose Mitchell, A Navajo Woman 1874-1977* ed. Charlotte J. Frisbie (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 15; see also Iverson, 26; see also Carol Douglas Sparks, "The Land

Through the raiding, the Navajo gained large herds of sheep, goats, and horses, which significantly changed their lifestyle. By the late seventeenth century, the Navajo primarily herded rather than engaging in their previous economic activities of hunting and growing maize.⁷

An important indirect influence of the Spanish resulted from their brutality towards the Pueblo, who lived closer to the Spanish than did the Navajo. After the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and their re-conquest in 1692 by the Spanish, many Pueblo people migrated north. The Pueblo were then in closer proximity to the Navajo and, after a relatively brief number of years, because of the Navajo's openness to other cultures, the Navajo came to adopt many aspects of Pueblo culture, including the Pueblo's use of clans, matrilineal descent, matrilineal residence, weaving, animal husbandry and parts of their mythology and religious ceremonies.⁸ Many of these changes increased the role and importance of women within the Navajo tribe.

Male and female gender roles during the seventeenth to late nineteenth centuries were in many ways complementary and equal, especially economically. Men acquired most of the family's livestock through

Incarnate, Navajo Women and the Dialogue of Colonialism, 1821-1870," in *Negotiators of Change, Historical Perspectives on Native American Women*, ed. Nancy Shoemaker (New York: Routledge, 1995), 138.

⁷ Oswalt, 328; see also Carolyn Niethammer, *Daughters of the Earth, the Lives and Legends of American Indian Women* (New York: Collier Books, 1977), 127-128.

⁸ Howard 7, 13-14; see also Dutton 69; see also Somner, 9; see also Peter Iverson, *Dine A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 20002), 23-28.

raiding and usually owned and cared for the horses and cattle, while usually women owned and cared for the vast sheep herds.⁹ Women wove valuable blankets and rugs from their sheep's wool. Besides weaving, women also usually made pottery and baskets while men made bows and arrows and crafted items out of iron, leather, and silver. However, these activities were not strictly divided by gender.¹⁰ All of the products were important to daily life and trade. Both women and men also contributed to the construction of their hogan¹¹-type homes. Men made and set up the wooden frame, while women applied the outer layer of mud. They built these at the various seasonal grazing sites.¹²

In many of the social aspects there was egalitarianism too. Carolyn Niethammer found that "restrictions on achievement were never made on the basis of sex, only on the basis of ability."¹³ Women and men could be medicine-people and many held important positions

⁹ Lawrence David Weiss, *The Development of Capitalism in the Navajo Nation: A Political-Economic History* (Minneapolis: MEP Publications, 1984), 33; see also Somner, 9; see also Sparks, 138.

¹⁰ Mary Shepardson, "The Gender Status of Navajo Women," in *Women and Power in Native North America*, ed Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 166.

¹¹ Hogans were houses shaped liked mounds made out of wood and mud, with a diameter on the inside ranging from 19 to 23 feet. The female Hogan was the place where the family lived, and a male Hogan was where ceremonies and meetings were conducted. Both Hogans have great religious significance.

¹² Shepardson, 166.

¹³ Niethammer, 127-128.

within their clan network.¹⁴ Women usually taught the small children and older daughters while the father instructed older sons. Inheritance was often evenly divided among children, with neither sex gaining more or less than the other.¹⁵ Either the wife or the husband could initiate divorce.¹⁶

Other aspects of their culture were not as egalitarian. With matrilineal descent and matrilocal residences, motherhood, not fatherhood, was central to Navajo culture.¹⁷ The earth, agricultural fields, and sacred mountains were all called mother, as were corn and sheep. Motherhood was thus defined in terms of reproduction and the ability to sustain life.¹⁸ Mothers were responsible for passing along Navajo religion and traditions to their young children and sustaining them through love and care.¹⁹ Three of their most central mythological characters were the maternal figures Changing Woman, Spider Woman, and Salt Woman.²⁰ When girls reached puberty, everyone celebrated the young woman's ability to become mothers at a *Kinaalda* ceremony.²¹

¹⁴ Ruth Roesell, *Women in Navajo Society* (Rough Rock, AZ: Navajo Resource Center, 1981), 121-123, 143-144.

¹⁵ Shepardson, 160, 168.

¹⁶ Gary Witherspoon, *Navajo Kinship and Marriage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 125-126, see also Shepardson 159-161, see also Roesell 61-62

¹⁷ Witherspoon, "Sheep in Navajo Culture," *American Anthropologist* 72 (1973): 1442; see also Witherspoon, *Navajo Kinship*, 15; see also Howard, 8.

¹⁸ Witherspoon, *Navajo Kinship*, 16, 125-126.

¹⁹ Roesell, 71; see also Somner, 13; see also Witherspoon, *Navajo Kinship*, 16.

²⁰ Howard, 8; see also Shepardson, 160.

²¹ Shepardson, 160, 164; see also Mitchell, 17.

Politically and socially, women held a more central role than men. While men generally held leadership positions for intertribal meetings and led wars and raids, the Navajo at that time were not held together by a centralized government but by clans, and within the clans women had an equal, and even over-riding say in all decisions.²² As it was a matriarchal society, mothers and grandmothers were the head of the clan and each matriarch generally had the final word in all family matters.²³ Women's central role was also exhibited by the custom of grown female children settling near their mothers with their own families and by mothers determining their children's clan and land and livestock inheritance. Mary Shepardson states that clan affiliations were a significant source of women's high status because Navajos were "born into" their mother's clan, which became their clan, and "born for" their father's clan, making the mother's clan of primary importance.²⁴ Additionally, the strongest relationship bonds were between mother and child and between siblings, with spousal and father-child bonds weaker, partly as a result of the other bonds and men's frequent absences.²⁵

Not only were men often absent raiding and conducting warfare, but in Navajo culture polygamy was acceptable and widely practiced, so participating men always alternated between their wives' houses.²⁶

²² Sparks, 138; see also Niethammer, 127-128.

²³ Niethammer, 128-129; see also Sparks, 138; Dutton, 74-75.

²⁴ Shepardson, 159-160; see also Oswalt, 340.

²⁵ Howard, 9-10; see also Roesell, 61-62; see also Witherspoon, *Navajo Kinship*, 27; see also Oswalt, 341.

²⁶ Shepardson, 168-169; see also Roesell, 60.

Marriages were often arranged and based on a contract of clan alliances by the husband's maternal uncle and the wife's parents.²⁷ Usually, a man married sisters and after the weddings, the sisters continued herding and weaving with their other female relatives, maintaining their economic and emotional support network. Extramarital relations were not looked down on and usually it was married men conducting them with unmarried women. A mother-in-law rule existed among the Navajo preventing a son-in-law and mother-in-law from ever looking directly at each other which also contributed to a male's absence from home, as he usually lived in close proximity to his mother-in-law. So, with husbands away raiding, fighting, staying with a different wife or sexual partner or with their own mothers, the home and female relatives gave women stability and economic independence from their husbands through herding and weaving.²⁸

The combination of women's ability to economically contribute to the family and their more central role in the family than men made them far less dependent on men than women in other societies. With men's frequent absences, mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, grandmothers and female cousins all worked together to maintain the homes, families and herds. Marsha L. Weisiger notes that when female members of a family formed strong bonds of interdependence, "men often stood on the periphery," and because women significantly controlled the land and livestock, women were

²⁷ Roesell, 57.

²⁸ Roesell, 61-62.

able to hold power over their own lives.²⁹ Unlike women in other societies who also economically contributed to the family, Navajo women maintained control of their land, livestock, crafts and any money they earned from them, ensuring themselves an income.³⁰

II. Assimilation - 1850s to 1950s

While the Spaniards influenced the Navajo, it was not through force or by policy. The United States, on the other hand, was forceful in making the Navajo act in the best interest of America and making them to assimilate into American culture. Among other negative outcomes, women's power within the community decreased as they became much more economically dependent on men and lost their political voice.

By the 1840s the Navajo were fairly wealthy from their livestock and there were about 9,500 members of the Navajo Nation in loosely related clans.³¹ Starting in 1846, the United States tried to end the raiding of the Navajo because it was interfering with American economic expansion. After several unsuccessful attempts, in November of 1863, Colonel "Kit" Carson and his troops conducted a "scorched earth" campaign, destroying as much of the Navajo's livestock and land as possible.³² Some Navajo managed to hide

²⁹ Marsha L. Weisiger, "Sheep Dreams: Environment, Cultural Identity, and Gender in Navajo Country," dissertation, (New Mexico State University, 2001), 92-96.

³⁰ Dutton, 74-75.

³¹ Weiss, 30.

³² Eric Henderson "Historical Background: Tuba City and Shiprock in *Drinking, Conduct Disorder, and Social Change: Navajo Experiences* ed Stephen J. Kunitz and Jerrold E. Levy

but about eight thousand had to surrender. On March 6, 1864 they started the "Long Walk," a forced three hundred mile march to Fort Sumner, also called Bosque Redondo. The Navajo were kept in captivity at the fort for four years and nearly two thousand died.³³ The alkaline water made them ill, the crops they were forced to plant continually failed, supplies and provisions were inadequate and medical conditions like syphilis, dysentery and malnutrition affected many.

After four years, the cost of maintaining the Navajo at the fort, plus a commissioner's publicized report of the terrible conditions made the government rethink its policy, and under the Treaty of 1868, the Navajo were allowed to leave.³⁴ They were allowed to return to their former land and received a new supply of sheep. In many ways they were able to resume their former way of life. It was during the Long Walk period that the Navajo began to see themselves as one people because they were treated as one by the American government.³⁵

Back on their reservation, through herding and making crafts, the Navajo slowly shifted from a subsistence economy to a profit-generating economy. With new trading posts appearing nearby, Navajo women and men were still able to equally contribute economically to the family. Women worked hard weaving rugs and blankets, while men crafted silver into jewelry, belts and other items for trade.

Women's role as the educator and transmitter of

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 14-15; see also Ellis, 21-22.

³³ Ellis, 121-122; see also Dutton, 72; see also Howard, 15.

³⁴ Howard, 14-15.

³⁵ Iverson, 10; see also Howard, 16.

culture became threatened when in 1887 Congress passed the Compulsory Indian Education Law, forcing many Navajo children to attend boarding school with Euro-American customs and curriculum. Usually the police had to pick the children up because they and their families resisted separation and forced acculturation. In the boarding schools, children were punished for speaking Navajo and teachers attempted to eradicate any trace of Navajo culture. Students frequently ran away.³⁶ Boarding schools also weakened the usually strong bonds between mother and children that had previously lasted all of their lives and composed the backbone of the culture as they worked together herding and weaving.

Because few pioneers were interested in settling on the Navajo land, the Navajo did not face relocation like numerous other tribes. However, their lands were rich in minerals, and the United States government was quick to make treaties with them to explore and mine these lands. For example, the Metalliferous Minerals Leasing Act of 1918 allowed the Secretary of the Interior to lease Navajo lands for mineral exploration and gave the Navajo five percent of the royalties to be used as Congress decided.³⁷ The mines provided employment opportunities for men, but few for women, creating an additional economic opportunity for men and thus somewhat altering economic gender dynamics in men's favor.

Despite these interferences by the American government, the Navajo were generally able to live well, herding and trading. In 1932, however, John Collier,

³⁶ Iverson, 13; see also Howard, 16.

³⁷ Howard, 18.

the newly appointed Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) enacted a stock reduction policy because he and other government officials believed that the Navajo were overgrazing their lands. At this time, more than seventy percent of Navajo income came from livestock, farming and crafts.³⁸ According to historian Peter Iverson, livestock, especially sheep, were essential to Navajo society and economy. They furnished security, became an integral part of one's identity and influenced how social groups were organized because caring for them provided the base for social cooperation and mutual interdependence; especially for women.³⁹ Due to the national depression, there was not a large market for the livestock and thousands of sheep were slaughtered between 1932 and 1936 by the U.S. government. According to Teresa L. McCarty, "stock reduction permeated all aspects of family and community life," and it "removed a way of living without providing an alternative."⁴⁰ Navajo Edward H. Spicer said that before the 1930s few Navajo were educated for occupations off the reservation, so with stock reduction they were ill-qualified to do work elsewhere.⁴¹

The stock reduction program was particularly detrimental to Navajo women because it deprived them of their livelihood. They had fewer sheep to herd and

³⁸ Henderson, 19.

³⁹ Iverson, 23-24.

⁴⁰ Teresa L. McCarty, *A Place to be Navajo: Rough Rock and the Struggle for Self-Determination in Indigenous Schooling* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 58-59.

⁴¹ Edward H. Spicer "The American Indians," in *Native American Voices, a Reader*, eds Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998), 15-16.

less wool with which to weave rugs and blankets to use in trade. Smaller flocks meant that not all of the female members and children of the family were needed to work together caring for them as before, so cooperation within and between family members and clans declined.⁴² Women also became more financially dependent on men because men were more likely to find ways to earn an income through employment on the railroads, in the mines or doing seasonal agriculture at large towns on and off the reservation.⁴³ Men's exposure to white culture was more extensive than women's, helping them economically. For example, more men than women served in the military during World War II, earning pensions, gaining exposure to the outside society and acquiring cultural knowledge that could help them find jobs. The few federal work programs offered in compensation for the stock reduction were primarily aimed at men, and the jobs that were available to women paid less.⁴⁴

Navajo Rose Mitchell (1874-1977) clearly showed in her autobiography how important sheep were to her family and how losing many of them as a result of the stock reduction changed their lives. In her family, her mother cared for the children, the home, and cooked, her father cared for the horses and cattle, went hunting and conducted ceremonies as a medicine man, and the older children cared for the sheep and goats. Growing up, Mitchell wove rugs while herding sheep with her older sisters. Mitchell wrote, "There was no end to our work as far as carding the wool, spinning it,

⁴² Henderson, 19.

⁴³ Howard, 18-19; see also McCarthy, 58-59.

⁴⁴ Shepardson, 174-175.

and then putting up the looms” but she said they liked that their work permitted them to buy items from the trading posts.⁴⁵ When Mitchell married, her mother advised her to keep weaving because then she would always be able to support herself and her children.⁴⁶ After several years of marriage, the stock reduction occurred, and Mitchell made fewer rugs because of the reduced wool at her disposal. For several years her husband worked at a distant mill, commuting home on the weekends. Eventually, he moved their family by the mill, breaking up the tightly knit kinship network. His work was the family’s main source of income.⁴⁷

The American government enforced patriarchy on the Navajo in several ways. The government ignored the matrilineal descent tradition of the Navajo when they wrote treaties and compiled the census and other records. For example, in the Treaty of 1868, although single women over the age of eighteen were eligible to own land, men were the only ones referred to as heads of households and eligible for one hundred and sixty acres.⁴⁸ In the censuses, men were nearly always listed as the heads of households. In the 1930s when the Bureau of Indian Affairs surveyed the Navajo lands for overgrazing, they also surveyed the ownership of the stock. Men were listed as the owners, although in reality women owned most livestock. Only Navajo men

⁴⁵ Mitchell, 47.

⁴⁶ Mitchell, 84.

⁴⁷ Mitchell, 91.

⁴⁸ “Treaty with the Navajo 1868,” in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Volume II*, editor Charles J. Kappler (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/nav1015.htm#mn30>.

were consulted about the stock reduction policy.⁴⁹

Politically, women lost their power because the U.S. changed the Navajo's political structure by centralizing it and placing men in all of the positions. Iverson noted that from the early twentieth century on, the Navajo government was patriarchal in practice because it reflected Euro-American ideas about leadership and it also reflected the values of patriarchal Christianity.⁵⁰ Navajo Emma Whitehorse notes that Navajo society worked well until the Christian missionaries arrived, telling the people that the men had to run everything.⁵¹ According to historian Roesell, before American influence, men welcomed and expected the participation of women in roles of leadership and decision-making and, additionally, women were not expected to keep quiet.⁵² When the United States helped organize the Navajo Tribal Council in 1923, women were not allowed to vote for the first several years, even though nationally American women had suffrage.⁵³ Over the years few women have served on the Tribal Council.

While the United States tried to enforce patriarchy by putting men in charge of households and appointing them as the political leaders, not all Navajo internalized these principles. In many families, women still held a central role with an equal voice in decision-

⁴⁹ Shepardson, 296-297.

⁵⁰ Iverson, 303.

⁵¹ Emma Whitehorse, "In My Family, the Women Ran Everything," in *Messengers of the Wind, Native American Women Tell their Life Stories*, ed Jane Katz (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 57.

⁵² Roesell 132-133, 143

⁵³ Shepardson, 174-175.

making.⁵⁴ However, the stock reduction policy devastated many families by taking away women's economic independence and, along with boarding schools, reduced their influence in the family. As a result, gender dynamics changed from an equal economic partnership with women central to the home and Navajo life to women being more economically dependent on men and having less of a voice in the larger community. Yet, while men were more likely to find work outside of the home than were women, they still faced racism, low pay and dangerous jobs like mining and working on railroads, which make the Navajo less wealthy as a group.

III. Native American Movement

During the 1960s and 1970s there was a national pan-Indian movement to fight for their rights and resist giving up their cultural ways. While among the Navajo this may have meant a return to a more herding-based and matriarchal society, surprisingly, few Navajo even participated in the movement and gender dynamics were not impacted.

After John Collier resigned as commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1945, federal government officials changed their attitude and policies towards Native Americans, and attempted to end any relationship with them. The resulting policy, called "termination," lasted from about 1945 to 1965.⁵⁵ As a first step in the termination policy, Congress established in 1946 the

⁵⁴ Roesell, Mitchell and Whitehorse.

⁵⁵ Garrick Bailey and Roberta Glenn Bailey, *A History of the Navajos, the Reservation Years* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1986), 239.

Indian Claims Commission, an office that examined past interactions between the federal government and the tribes over land cessions and treaty payments. The federal government hoped that it could pay the tribes whatever money the Commission found the government owed them and that this payment would clear the government of any further responsibility toward the tribes.⁵⁶ Congress wanted to eventually shut down the BIA. The government also rejected Collier's policy of cultural pluralism and hoped to force Native Americans to integrate into mainstream society.⁵⁷

With the Termination Policy, tribal lands were available for purchase. Between 1954 and 1962 over one hundred tribes were terminated from federal assistance and approximately 2.5 million acres of their lands were taken from them soon after.⁵⁸ Native Americans were not consulted about the land purchase policies. When they did learn of them, the National Congress of American Indians voiced their opposition.⁵⁹ Soon they were joined by other groups.

During the 1960s and early 1970s many Native Americans fought against the idea that monetary settlement could be used to erase the damage done to Native Americans, and they opposed the termination

⁵⁶ Roger L. Nichols, *American Indians in U.S. History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 188-189.

⁵⁷ Nichols, 189-191.

⁵⁸ Fremont J. Lyden and Lyman H. Legters, "A Historical Context for Evaluation, U.S. Commission on Human Rights," in *Native Americans and Public Policy*, eds Lyden and Legters (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 27-28.

⁵⁹ Nichols, 189-191.

policy, the destruction of their culture and the seizure of their land and resource rights. Within their new urban neighborhoods, Native Americans formed and joined multi-tribal groups to protest and fight against the government; these groups included the Indian Rights Association, the Association on American Indian Affairs, American Indian Civil Rights Council, Indian Land Rights Association, and the more radical youth-led groups of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) and American Indian Movement (AIM).⁶⁰ In 1964 the newly formed NIYC demanded Red Power: “the power of the Indian people over all their own affairs,” and advocated that Native Americans “establish lives for themselves on their own terms.”⁶¹ Four years later, radical youth founded AIM, a group that demanded their people be able to live traditional lives on their own lands without the patronization of the BIA.⁶²

Both women and men participated in these organizations, although there were far more male leaders, especially in the beginning. However, when police jailed more men, women took over more of the leadership. As Madonna Thunderhawk, of the Hunkpapa Lakota AIM, said, “Indian women have had to be strong because of what this colonial system has done to our men...alcohol, suicide, car wrecks, the whole thing. And after Wounded Knee [1973], while all that persecution of the men was going on, we women had

⁶⁰ Olson and Wilson, 160-161; also see Ted Schwarz, *The Last Warrior* (NY: Orion Books, 1993), 313-314.

⁶¹ Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *Red Power, the American Indians' Fight for Freedom* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), 13-14; also see Nichols, 195.

⁶² Schwarz, 314.

to keep things going.”⁶³ Women also formed their own activism groups, such as Women of All Red Nations (WARN), which at its founding conference was composed of three hundred women from thirty nations.⁶⁴ Phyllis Young, a WARN founder said, “What we are about is drawing on our traditions, regaining our strength as women in the ways handed down to us by our grandmothers, and their grandmothers before them. Our creation of an Indian women’s organization is not a criticism or division from our men... [but] a common struggle for the liberation of our people and our land.”⁶⁵

All of the different organizations shared the desire for Native Americans to shape their own identity and future through self-determination.⁶⁶ Self-determination meant “maintaining the federal protective role, but providing at the same time increased tribal participation and functioning in crucial areas of local government.”⁶⁷ Ultimately, they were successful. In 1975 Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act, giving tribes independence from the federal government but not making them

⁶³ Diane R. Schulz, “Speaking to Survival,” in *Awakened Women e-magazine*, August 19, 2001, http://www.awakenedwoman.com/native_women.htm.

⁶⁴ Donna Langston, “American Indian women’s activism in the 1960s and 1970s,” *Hypatia – A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, 18, no. 2 (2003) p. 114 via First Search on CWI.

⁶⁵ Schulz, http://www.awakenedwoman.com/native_women.htm.

⁶⁶ Jack D. Forbes, *Native Americans and Nixon, Presidential Politics and Minority Self-Determination 1969-1972* (Berkeley: Regents of the University of California, 1981), 19; see also Olson and Wilson, 161 and 166.

⁶⁷ Lyden and Legters, 28.

assimilate; they dealt with federal officials on a government-to-government basis.⁶⁸

Navajo Herbert Blatchford was one of the founders of the NIYC activist group, but overall very few Navajo were involved directly in the various national Native American activist and political groups. This was in great part because they rarely interacted with non-Navajos. The Navajo had the largest reservation in the country, and most of those who lived there permanently had little direct contact or interaction with the outside world. Even of those who lived in cities (by the 1970s nearly forty-percent did for at least part of the year), where most of the Native American activist organizations started and found the greatest support, few were involved in any pan-Indian activism.⁶⁹ According to a study conducted on Native Americans living in Los Angeles during that time, Navajos continued to refrain from associating with non-Navajos, including avoiding contact with non-Navajo Native American and pan-Indian organizations and non-Native American organizations. Compared to other urban Native Americans, Navajos generally maintained stronger ties to the reservation, making frequent visits take part in events like elections, festivals and family gatherings. The study also showed that compared to other urban residents, Navajo women and men were more likely to marry another Navajo and were more likely to rely on relatives and Navajo friends as a major source of help.⁷⁰ Another study in the 1980s showed

⁶⁸ Nichols, 205.

⁶⁹ Olson and Wilson, 210.

⁷⁰ Ann Metcalf, "Navajo Women in the City: Lessons from a Quarter-Century of Relocation," *American Indian Quarterly* 6, no. 1-2 (1982), 77 and 78.

similar results; ethnic identity continued to be strongly valued among the Navajo and that those in the cities hardly interacted with non-Navajo.⁷¹

Another important reason why the majority of Navajos did not participate in the pan-Indian movement was that they faced different problems than did most other tribes. The Navajo were never considered for termination as they were classified as a Group Three tribe, one that would continue receiving government supervision for an indefinite period.⁷² Due to an income from mining on their land by the government and private corporations, the Navajo Nation was wealthier than many other tribes and their Navajo Council enjoyed more tribal sovereignty than did many other tribes' governments, so they were not as in need of self-determination as were other tribes. Also, they did not face the problem of immigrating people trying to take their lands.

On the other hand, the Navajo were influenced by the feelings of pride that emerged from the Native American Movement. They shared the sentiments of wanting to preserve their cultural ways and maintain control over their lands and resources. One result of this was a resurgence of Navajo cultural pride on the reservation, especially among the youth, many of whom started wearing more traditional clothing, jewelry and hairstyles and learning more about their history and traditions. However, the renewed pride and the Native American Movement overall seemed to have very little influence on gender dynamics in Navajo society.

⁷¹ Olson and Wilson, 211.

⁷² Baileys, 239.

IV. Feminist Movement

The contemporary feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s did indirectly impact Navajo society. It was indirect because few Native Americans, including Navajo, participated in the movement, but Navajo women benefited from the changed national policies, altering gender dynamics.

From the beginning, most Europeans did not understand that Native American tribes were generally egalitarian societies that valued women and men. Instead, they thought that the men were lazy or emasculated, leading them to try to change Native American culture so that women would be subjugated to men as they were in European cultures. Thus, most Native American women saw patriarchy as the result of assimilation and did not feel the same need as Euro-American women to fight against the men of their own ethnicity but rather against the colonial oppression of all Euro-Americans.⁷³ For Native American women, a way to fight sexism was to advocate a renewal of tribal traditions, such as matrilineal and matrilineal traditions and self-determination.⁷⁴

The racism of the Euro-American women who composed the majority of the movement's membership was another reason few Native American women participated. While they expected Native American women to support them in their issues, Euro-American feminists rarely thought of or wanted to help

⁷³ Jaimes Guerrero, "Patriarchal colonialism' and indigenism: implications for native feminist spirituality and native womanism," *Hypatia – A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 18, no. 2 (2003), p. 58 (accessed through online database CWI).

⁷⁴ Schulz, http://www.awakenedwoman.com/native_women.htm.

native women with the issues they wanted to pursue.⁷⁵

Few Euro-American women were able to understand the Native American women's issues because they did not comprehend the reasons for the oppression they faced. Pam Colorado, an Oneida scholar, said, "Nothing I've encountered in feminist theory addresses the fact of our colonization, or the wrongness of white women's stake in it...I can only conclude that...feminism is essentially a Euro-supremacist ideology and is therefore quite imperialistic in its implication."⁷⁶ Racism also often led white women to assume that their way of thinking and acting was superior when they did try to work together with native women.⁷⁷

Native American women were interested in improving the lives of women, just not necessarily in the same way or for the same reasons as Euro-American women. Euro-American, mostly middle and upper-class women, wanted to be treated as equals to men, receiving the same education, job opportunities, and legal rights. They wanted their identity to be less defined by their marital or maternal status, and they did not want the role of wife and mother to dominate their life. Culturally, many of these issues did not apply the same way to Native American women. For example, while many Euro-American feminists felt that motherhood was the source of women's oppression, Native American women found the role empowering because being a mother and grandmother increased

⁷⁵ Langston, CWI.

⁷⁶ Schulz, http://www.awakenedwoman.com/native_women.htm.

⁷⁷ Langston, CWI

women's status in their society.⁷⁸

Native American women activists combined their two identities as Native Americans and as women to form groups like the Indigenous Women's Network in the United States and Canada and the previously mentioned group WARN.⁷⁹ The goals included improving educational opportunities, health care, and reproductive rights for Native American women, combating violence against women, forced sterilization of women, ending stereotyping and exploitation of Native Americans, and protecting the land and environment where Native Americans live.⁸⁰ Both of these organizations continue to regularly send delegates to international conferences and United Nations forums to advocate for the human rights of all indigenous people.⁸¹ As with the national Native American Movement, few Navajo participated in organizations like WARN or the Indigenous Women's Network. Again, this is probably due to the Navajo tradition of refraining from interaction with non-Navajos. However, in looking at Navajo history, improvements in areas like education, employment, family planning and female-specific issues were addressed and/or improved for Navajo women soon after national laws were changed for women in the general population because of the feminist movement.

As a result of the actions of the feminist movement, federal laws were enacted that improved women's

⁷⁸ Langston, CWI

⁷⁹ Schulz, http://www.awakenedwoman.com/native_women.htm.

⁸⁰ "Women of All Red Nations," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1999, http://search.eb.com/women/articles/Women_of_all_Red_Nations.html, see also Langston on CWI

⁸¹ Guerrero, 58.

education. For example, in 1972 Title IX of the Education Act Amendment required that all educational institutions that used federal funds treat males and females equally. In 1974 the Women's Educational Equity Act passed in Congress, providing federal funds for projects designed to promote gender equity in the curriculum, in counseling and guidance, in physical education and in the development of classroom materials. It also supported expanding vocational and career education for women.⁸² Most Navajo attended public schools and the females benefited from the changes. These laws, combined with the economic necessity for females to attend school because of the stock reduction and a lack of vocational jobs for women, significantly increased the number of Navajo females at school. Until around the mid- to late-1970s there were more Navajo males at school than females, but, since that time Navajo female students have increasingly surpassed the number of male students, especially in college enrollment.⁸³ The Navajo Tribal Council, realizing the benefits of education in their post-stock reduction society, founded and controlled several schools as well as scholarship funds for high school graduates to attend college.⁸⁴ In 1978-1979, 1,119

⁸² "Women's Educational Equity Act," Houghton Mifflin, Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History, n.d. http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/women/html/wm_040100_womenseducat.htm ; see also Elizabeth Kamarck Minnich, "Education," Houghton Mifflin, Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History, n.d. http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/women/html/wm_011000_education.htm

⁸³ Mary Shepardson, "The Status of Navajo Women," *American Indian Quarterly* 6, no. 1-2 (1982), 155.

⁸⁴ Bertha P. Dutton, *American Indians of the Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 77-78.

women and 596 men received scholarships.⁸⁵ By the 1980s, twice as many women as men were in higher education, and women continue to out-number men.⁸⁶

During the 1970s and 1980s many of these college-educated Navajo women were able to find employment without moving to cities because of a shift in the kinds of jobs available on the reservation. During the beginning of the twentieth century most jobs were in mining, agriculture and developing the natural resources, and they were given to males. By the later part of the century, the Navajo Nation, BIA, public schools, National Park Service, and other federal, state, and county agencies became the primary employers.⁸⁷ Many jobs with these organizations required clerical skills or some kind of postsecondary education or training and were not necessarily gender specific. Since women held more college degrees, they had more job choices, raising their economic status.

Employment for Navajo women was also influenced by the Feminist Movement. One of the important pieces of legislation in the 1960s was the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The act prohibited discrimination by trade unions, schools or employers on the bases of race and sex. The government established the Equal

⁸⁵ Shepardson, 153, 156; see also Klara B. Kelley, *Navajo Land Use: An Ethnoarchaeological Study* (NY: Academic Press, 1986), 152; see also Baileys, 273-274.

⁸⁶ Peter Iverson, *Dine A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 20002), 303; see also Shepardson, 156; see also William T. Cross, "Pathway to the Professoriate: the American Indian Faculty Pipeline," *Journal of American Indian Education* 30, no. 2 (January 1991) on <http://jaie.asu.edu/v30/V30S2pat.htm>.

⁸⁷ Iverson, *Dine, a History of the Navajo*, 276-277.

Employment Opportunity Commission to enforce the provisions. In the late 1960s the Navajo Nation adopted an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) similar to the one under consideration at that time in Congress. The Navajo ERA stated that: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the Navajo Nation on account of sex."⁸⁸

The new employment equity legislation impacted Navajo women. According to Shepardson most Navajo women worked as waitresses, cooks, or housecleaners in the 1940s. In 1975 she found that many women were employed as teachers, professors, school principals, administrators in education, public health workers, nurses, social workers and there was even one female lawyer, Claudeen Arthur. By 1981 Shepardson called the increased number of women in professional jobs "striking."⁸⁹ Shepardson attributes this to affirmative action by the BIA and Indian Health Services, as "both had officers for Equal Employment Opportunity service whose responsibility it was to keep records on employment of minorities and women."⁹⁰ In the late 1970s Shepardson found that there were even female Navajo police officers on the reservation. Two women had at that time recently been promoted to sergeant.⁹¹ Job choice continued to increase: In 1991 Lori Arviso Alvord became the first female Navajo surgeon, in 1998 Teresa Lynch received her pilot's license and in 2003 Claudeen Arthur became the first

⁸⁸ Shepardson, 161-162.

⁸⁹ Shepardson, 158.

⁹⁰ Shepardson, 158.

⁹¹ Shepardson, 161.

female Chief Justice of the Navajo Supreme Court.⁹²

Family planning was another influence of the Feminist Movement. In 1963 recently legalized Birth Control Pills were widely available, and in 1973 *Roe v. Wade* made abortions legal. On the reservation, the Navajo Council accepted a program of family planning in 1972. In 1974 the Navajo Nation Family Planning Program was organized with a goal to provide Navajos with family planning information and access to services.⁹³ Historian Anne Wright found that among the more assimilated and educated women these changes were appreciated. Many of them wanted to have fewer children because of the economic strain the children often created. They were significantly more likely to use contraceptives than more traditional women who expressed views that being a full-time mother was the only way to be and that children were valuable because they take care of the parents when the parents are old.⁹⁴ However, fewer of these women than the acculturated women worked outside the home, so they did not face the economic drain of paid childcare. Not all women favored family planning, but it helped increase women's economic status by giving them more job options and fewer expenses.

While most of the outcomes of the Feminist Movement helped raise Navajo women's economic status, it also helped address female-specific social issues. For example, in 1983, under the Office of Navajo Women

⁹² Iverson, *Dine, a History of the Navajo*, 304; see also Levi Long, "Council confirms first female chief justice," *Navajo Times*, 23 October 2003, page A1.

⁹³ Shepardson, 161.

⁹⁴ Anne Wright, "An Ethnography of the Navajo Reproductive Cycle," *American Indian Quarterly* 6, no. 1-2 (1982), 59 and 60.

and Families, the Navajo Women's Commission was created to address additional women's issues, many of which were issues that Euro-Americans also addressed in their feminist movement. Under the commission, policies and training developed to help prevent sexual harassment. It created two child support enforcement offices, monitored legislation and lobbied on the state and federal level for child support enforcement, domestic violence prevention, education and a woman's right to choose. The commission also worked to promote more women to leadership roles within the tribe.⁹⁵

Although economically the feminist movement helped make the Navajo gender dynamics closer to what they had been during pre-assimilation times, politically women still lagged behind men. The first few years after the establishment of the Navajo Tribal Council women were not allowed to participate, and it took nearly thirty years until Annie Wauneka became the first female elected to the Council in 1951. For many years she was the lone woman on the Council, although numerous Navajo women were involved in politics by voting. Shepardson notes that, "the Navajo Tribal Council is the organization which has clung most tenaciously to the male-oriented model."⁹⁶

Wauneka's presence on the Council and contribution to Navajo society was significant, showing that women were just as capable as men at leading the tribe. She was quickly appointed chairwoman of the

⁹⁵ Nathan J. Tohtsoni, "We want a woman president' Navajo Women's Commission zeroes in on male attitudes," *Navajo Times*, 28 December 2000, page A1.

⁹⁶ Shepardson, 28.

council's Health and Welfare Committee. In 1956 she was appointed to the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory Committee on Indian Health.⁹⁷ She led a significant fight against tuberculosis, traveling all over the reservation to provide health care education.⁹⁸ Under her guidance the Health Committee provided education about nutrition, hygiene and sanitation. By the end of the 1950s, the infant death rate declined by nearly fifty-percent.⁹⁹ In 1963 she received the Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in peacetime.¹⁰⁰ Wauneka certainly proved that women could be successful on the Council and many women have looked to her as a positive role model.¹⁰¹

Unfortunately, decades after Wauneka retired, the number of women on the Council, composed of 88 members, has continued to remain under ten at any given time. Women also lag behind men in the number serving on various political boards. Conferences centered on empowering women have been held with increasing frequency since the early 1990s to rectify the imbalance. For example, in 1996 the Navajo Women's Commission sponsored a meeting at which women could attend sessions on topics ranging from single parenting, women in politics, childbirth and sexual harassment, to the possibilities of a female

⁹⁷ "Annie Dodge Wauneka headed for National Women's Hall of Fame," *Navajo Times*, 7 September 2000, page A9.

⁹⁸ Deenise Becenti, "Navajos will miss 'Dr. Annie': Many remember, 'She was a good grandma,'" *Navajo Times*, 13 November 1997, page A1.

⁹⁹ Metcalf, 154.

¹⁰⁰ "Annie Dodge Wauneka headed for National Women's Hall of Fame," page A9.

¹⁰¹ Becenti, page A1.

president of the Navajo Nation.¹⁰² Commissioner Gloria Means said, "We're a matriarchal society, I think it's time for women to support one another and praise one another."¹⁰³ Councilwoman Louise Yellowman, who served for twenty-four years, said that men are good thinkers and fathers but as politicians they lack vision, planning, mentoring and individuality. Jack Utter, a former university teacher of federal Indian law who lives and works on the Navajo Reservation, found that Navajo female politicians look to their grandmothers as role models, trying to stay true to their heritage when making decisions, while Navajo men look to non-Indian politicians as their role models.¹⁰⁴ This is another reason many women want more female politicians; that is, to adhere more closely to the traditional ways.

Overall the feminist movement helped gender dynamics to more closely resemble pre-assimilation dynamics economically but not politically; yet, during the 1980s there were mixed feelings among Navajos as to their status, mostly depending on their age and location. All of the urban women agreed that women's status had been reduced with the livestock reduction, but when asked how the present compared to traditional times, they fell into three categories. The first category, mostly composed of younger, more assimilated women, felt that their present status was high because their education made them equal to men, they could enjoy the benefits of modern conveniences and

¹⁰² Iverson, *Dine, a History of a People*, 304.

¹⁰³ Iverson, *Dine, a History of a People*, 304.

¹⁰⁴ Marley Shebala, "Topic: women as politicians, leaders," *Navajo Times*, 21 February 2002, pg A2.

they had more occupational choices. Women in the second category had mixed feelings: they had a higher status but faced discrimination, felt the old way was better for raising children, and they disliked having to leave their extended families to find jobs. Some women in the group said that their husbands acted like macho white men, but others felt equal with their husbands. The last group was mostly comprised of elderly women who said that the old way was best because there was better food, cleaner air and no one to bother them.¹⁰⁵ Christine Conte found that women who lived in a rural part of the reservation preferred living a traditional lifestyle. Most were over the age of forty, monolingual in the native Navajo language, with little education. To live off the reservation they would have to work at a low-paying job and try to pay for housing and child-care. They opted instead to live in greater poverty and stay near their extended families on their own lands. They felt that their status had changed very little.¹⁰⁶

Even though men's political status has increased, since assimilation, it is important to note that their social status has decreased in many ways and neither the Native American nor feminist movement helped changed this. The mother-child bond is still stronger than the father-child bond, and some men believe that the only ways left for them to gain respect and clout are through political or religious leadership. Both of these positions are available only to older men, often

¹⁰⁵ Shepardson, 162-164.

¹⁰⁶ Christine Conte, "Ladies, Livestock, Land and Lucre: Women's Networks and Social Status on the Western Navajo Reservation," *American Indian Quarterly* 6, no. 1-2 (1982), 108-109.

leaving young men unhappy and destructive. Factors like high unemployment and racism have caused more men than women to engage in risk-taking behavior like excessive alcohol consumption which may lead to violence, fast driving or suicide, all of which lower men's life expectancy.¹⁰⁷ Their behavior also negatively affects women. For example, in 1979, the *Navajo Times* reported that rape was the number one crime on the Navajo reservation, which suggests that women are not respected by some men.¹⁰⁸ Native American activist and writer Paula Gunn Allen writes that "cases of violence against women are powerful evidence that the status of women within the tribes has suffered grievous decline since contact...the amount of violence against women, alcoholism, abuse, and neglect by women against their children and their aged relatives have all increased. Those social ills were virtually unheard of among most tribes fifty years ago."¹⁰⁹ Many Navajo are working to try to change these negative realities, but as so much of their culture is influenced by mainstream culture, and Navajo men especially are influenced by non-Navajo men, it is likely that until these problems and racism are solved in mainstream society, they will not end in Navajo society.

¹⁰⁷ Howard, 223 and 224.

¹⁰⁸ Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 191.

¹⁰⁹ Allen, 191.

History's Housekeepers: Gender, Museums and the Historic Preservation Movement in Nineteenth Century America

Devon Zotovich

After the dawn of the new Republic, early nineteenth century Americans explored what it meant to be an American. America was the New World and its inhabitants desired to break their ties with Europe, along with their pasts. Although Americans wanted to be free of all things European, they desperately desired the legitimization of their country's status in the world. Elite male scholars and politicians concentrated on the future of the young nation, and formed ideas and beliefs that were unique to America. Americans did not glorify their very recent history. Instead, they extolled the optimistic outlook for their new civilization.

Even though America was a new democracy, the Constitution did not provide equal rights for all. As American society and culture developed, a gendered division of sexes ensued, creating separate spheres for men and women. These gender roles defined men's place in public and women's place in private. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the ideologies of Republican Motherhood and the Cult of True Womanhood developed to keep women in their designated roles. Republican Motherhood stated that it was the responsibility of women to nurture the next generation of patriotic Americans.¹ Similarly, the Cult of True

¹ Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 229.

Womanhood asserted that women were the paragons of virtue. These two ideas characterized women as the more morally upright of the sexes, a belief that would plant the seeds of its own destruction.

Although Republican Motherhood and the Cult of True Womanhood fostered the limitations of women in American society, women embraced these ideologies. Women used the same precepts that prevented their involvement in activities outside of the home to justify their entrance into the male public sphere. As the moral backbone for the new Union, upper and middle-class white women participated in social reforms as a civic duty. Volunteer activities operated within women's prescriptive roles, as it was viewed that women should extend the grace of their Christian homes to causes in need of aid. These activities were manifested in the public sphere, including suffrage, temperance and the abolition of slavery.²

Several women's organizations founded in nineteenth century focused on preserving the new history of the nation. After Ann Pamela Cunningham and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association successfully obtained and restored George Washington's Mount Vernon estate in 1860, other women's groups rapidly emulated their success. As a result, women's groups protected cemeteries, landscapes and historic buildings, while also collecting American artifacts.³ By the middle of the nineteenth century, these groups ignited a historic preservation movement. Preserving historic homes

² Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 20.

³ Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman, *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 17-18.

and the collections of artifacts that accompanied them created the institution of the house museum, the first museums of American history.⁴ Women's groups spearheaded the historic preservation movement, using the skills and knowledge they acquired through Republican Motherhood and the Cult of True Womanhood, conserving America's history for generations to come.

Women's Roles in Early America

During the colonial period in America, men and women worked in parallel, sharing tasks in and outside the home. Although a sexual division of labor existed, men and women worked as partners to ensure the survival of their families. Men generally worked in agriculture, and women managed the household as well as home industry. The essential duties colonial women performed resulted in "a position of unprecedented importance and equality within the socio-economic unit of the family." Colonial women enjoyed rights that differed from British common law. For example, in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, women held property and voted in town meetings.⁵

Following the Revolutionary War, colonial communities lost their administrative authority as the powers of the Republic were consolidated. Republican ideology reordered America's political structure and defined politics as a "strictly male arena" using the ancient Greek model. Women lost many of the legal and economic rights granted to them before the war and

⁴ Dubrow & Goodman, 22.

⁵ Joan Hoff-Wilson, "The Illusion of Change: Women and the American Revolution," in *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, ed. Alfred Young. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976) 394.

suffered new limitations under the Republic. Aristotle's philosophy stated only men possessed the ambitious and aggressive qualities necessary to be political beings in the public sector. "Women were thought to make their moral choices in the context of the household, a woman's domain that Aristotle understood to be a non-public, lesser institution that served the polis."⁶

As men took on their role in the public sphere of the new Republic, women assumed their new identity within the home. Women were banned from participating in public politics, but mothers obtained a "political" role inside of the home through their new task of nurturing virtuous male citizens. Kerber refers to this new role as "Republican Motherhood." In their domestic sphere, women avoided the evils and corruption of public politics, allowing them to maintain their religiousness and virtue that they, by nature, ostensibly possessed. The purity and honor associated with women's sphere enabled them to be the perfect instructors of republican values to the next generation of patriots.

Social theorists at the time recognized the significance of women's influential role in the home and encouraged women to gain knowledge of republican ideology to incorporate those values in their homes. As one social commentator observed in 1787, "It is of the utmost importance, that the women should be well instructed in the principles of liberty, in a republic. [T]he first patriots of ancient times, were formed by

⁶ Kerber, 7.

their mothers.”⁷ Additionally, prescriptive literature assured women, “The solidity and stability of the liberties of your country rest with you. Your country therefore demands... that you exercise all you power and influence in this cause.”⁸ Women, the more pure of the sexes, were morally obligated to raise sons to be responsible voters, ensuring the survival of the Republic. Republican Motherhood created a political context in which private female virtues comfortably coexisted with the civic virtue, increasing the stability of the new nation.⁹

During the period of 1815 to 1865 in America, the division of male and female spheres widened. Men’s work took them out of the home into realm of business and enterprise. America evolved from a pastoral society to an increasingly modern way of life with the industrialization of manufacturing and agriculture.¹⁰ Middle-class women’s domestic responsibilities expanded, as their role in the agricultural and commercial economy shrank. In early America, men were the “movers, the doers, the actors,” while “woman’s place was unquestionably by her own fireside- as daughter, sister, but most of all as wife and mother.”¹¹ Through

⁷ Sidney, “Maxims for Republics,” *The American Museum; or, Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces and c. Prose and Poetical* 2 (1787): 80. www.proquest.com (accessed February 8, 2005).

⁸ “Female influence” *The New York Magazine* May 1795. 297.

⁹ Kerber, 10-12.

¹⁰ Ellen Perry Berkeley and Matilda McQuaid, eds., *Architecture: A Place for Women* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989.), 7.

¹¹ Barbara Welter, *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976), 27, 31.

Republican Motherhood, women were acknowledged as the civilizers of the nation. This concept further evolved during the early nineteenth-century, extolling the virtuousness of women's place inside the home and its morally uplifting effect on society. Historian Barbara Welter refers to this phenomenon as the cult of True Womanhood or the cult of domesticity. The True Woman possessed the "four cardinal virtues—piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity."¹² These attributes prescribed that women's sphere was in the home.

Women's Benevolence Societies

Early nineteenth-century women embraced the cult of True Womanhood and took their prescribed roles very seriously. For many women during this period, religion was the cornerstone of their existence. Clergymen preached that religion belonged to women by divine right and their piety was a gift from God.¹³ However, women's gift of spirituality was not to be shared from the pulpit, as only men were permitted to hold leadership positions in churches. Nonetheless, clergymen encouraged women to share their piousness with the community by creating charitable societies. Women's church groups appeared in America as early as 1790, and by the 1830s, most churches had a women's group supporting the congregation. These women's groups ran Sunday schools, visited the poor, and most importantly, raised the funds necessary to carry out their charitable actions. The women who created charitable societies structured their groups in a methodical manner and communicated with newly

¹² Welter, 21.

¹³ Welter, 22.

formed women's societies, instructing them on how to organize, elect officers, operate meetings and publish reports.¹⁴ The effective, business-like manner in which women carried out their charity work was all done without violating the boundaries of the woman's sphere. These behaviors would later contribute to women's capability in forming historic preservation societies.

Although the ideology of True Womanhood was designed to keep women in the home, the moral authority granted to women through this ideology led women to reach out to those in need outside of their homes. Women learned the skills necessary to organize and fund other social reform societies from their participation in church based charity groups. The woman's sphere started to expand beyond the family and church, extending to those in American society whom they considered morally depraved. As the guardians of all that was good and decent in society, women believed that they were morally responsible for the betterment of American culture. By the 1820s social critics insisted that "women assume a unique responsibility to disseminate Christian values and counter the materialism and greed of the nineteenth-century male."¹⁵ The virtues that were inherent in women were needed to provide balance in the industrialization and urbanization of the country. The American government was not at that time invested in the task of enforcing moral standards. Women, therefore, assumed the duty of preserving social order.¹⁶ One of

¹⁴ Ginzberg, 36-38.

¹⁵ Ginzberg, 14.

¹⁶ Paula Baker, "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780-1920," *American Historical Review* 89 (1984): 621.

the first challenges women's benevolence societies undertook was that of temperance. These groups were successful in their mission to reduce drinking and expanded their benevolence to other areas of society. By the 1830s, women's groups had also organized to eliminate prostitution, slavery and crime. Women wanted to perfect society and protect it from the downfalls they believed to characterize Europe. As a result of the benevolence societies' concentration on the well-being of women, children, the household and the community, women formed a significant public role by working from their private sphere.¹⁷

Although nineteenth-century women were encouraged to join social reform organizations, the participation of women who had young children was frowned upon. The duties of women within their homes as prescribed by the cult of domesticity demanded a lot of time. Social critics at the time feared married women might neglect their families in the process of supporting their causes. Nineteenth-century society held that women with grown children, young unmarried women, and women without children were best suited for membership in benevolence groups. However, unmarried women's participation in these groups only lasted for as long as they were single. Once married, they would have to drop out of their particular organization to tend to their new homes and husbands.

The Development of Women's Involvement in Historic Preservation

By the middle of the nineteenth-century, women's benevolence societies took on a new cause, that of

¹⁷ Baker, 630.

historic preservation.¹⁸ Following in the footsteps of women's abolitionist and temperance groups, women's historic preservation societies publicized, fundraised, bought and restored properties to save some of the nation's most important landmarks. "Nineteenth-century women saw preservation as an avocation and as an amateur, in the best sense of that word, pursuit."¹⁹ Women's preservation societies became directly involved with sites and structures related to the young history of the nation. These groups took their responsibilities seriously and aimed to preserve historic properties as accurately as possible, thus filling visitors with patriotism when visiting these sites. While the most notable sites were associated with the founding fathers, women's societies protected cemeteries, landscapes, gardens and historic buildings, while also collecting artifacts pertinent to American history.

Americans were taking notice of historic properties at this time, but women's preservation groups appeared to have spearheaded the movement. "Women were at the forefront of the historic preservation movement from the earliest effort to commemorate the nation's origins."²⁰ The first instance of women organizing to preserve the nation's historic past occurred in 1830 when Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of *Godey's Ladies Book*, organized a committee of women to raise funds for the incomplete Boston's Bunker Hill Memorial which had been started by a men's preservation society. Hale and her many readers set up fundraisers for the cause and eventually paid for more than half of

¹⁸ Barbara J. Howe, "Women in Historic Preservation: The Legacy of Ann Pamela Cunningham," *The Public Historian* 12 (1990): 31.

¹⁹ Dubrow and Goodman, 17-18.

²⁰ Berkeley and McQuaid, 159.

the memorial. Furthermore, women's traditional exclusion from politics and economics suggested their lack of interest in personal gain in preserving historic properties. American society, in fact, viewed women as beings incapable of selfishness, and acknowledged that women's preservation societies undertook their task with the best interests of the nation at heart.²¹

Women's involvement in historic preservation fell in line with the precepts of Republican Motherhood and the cult of domesticity. Republican Motherhood supported the importance of preserving national sites in order to imbue a sense of patriotism in future generations. Additionally, the cult of domesticity led to the creation of new domestic tasks for nineteenth-century women. With men's work removed from the home, women of the emerging middle-class had to make their homes into a sanctuary in order to relieve their spouses of the pressures from the public world. To recreate their domestic environment, women became experts in the "domestic arts" including housekeeping, decoration, and antique collecting. The skills that women used in their domestic sphere equipped them for the tasks of preservation and restoration of America's historic properties. These skills, as well as women's later involvement in Sanitary Fairs and the Colonial Revival, provided women with the knowledge and desire necessary to take on the cause of historic preservation. Although women did not receive a formal education as men did, they were not ill prepared for their huge undertaking of historic preservation.

The cult of True Womanhood manifested itself in many forms in the nineteenth-century woman's

²¹ Baker, 625.

household. Beautifying the home was of special importance to women; housework became almost an art form. Housework shielded women from the evils of idleness, keeping them busy throughout the day. Additionally, the results of good housekeeping created a happy home for husbands, sons and brothers so that they did not have to go in search of a good time somewhere else, such as in bars or brothels.²² Proper housekeeping was an essential element in the restoration and maintenance of historic homes and properties. As this task was clearly within the bounds of the woman's sphere, women were best suited to carry out this work.

The cult of True Womanhood not only groomed women to be excellent caretakers of the home but also to be skilled decorators and designers, skills that would later be put to work in historic preservation in the public sphere. The decoration of homes rose to a new standard for middle-class women, as there was less labor-intensive work for the lady of the house to participate in, because most middle-class women had the help of servants. In the middle of the nineteenth century, several form of prescriptive literature was published to instruct middle-class women on the proper upkeep and design of their homes. Louisa Tuthill, a close friend of Sarah Josepha Hale, published the first book on American architecture titled *History of Architecture from the Earliest Times; its Present Condition in Europe and the United States* in 1848. Tuthill dedicated her groundbreaking book "to the Ladies of the United States of America, the acknowledged arbitrators of taste."²³ Tuthill recognized

²² Welter, 31.

²³ Berkeley and McQuaid, 5, 7-13.

women's interest in home design and architecture. She wrote her book to promote American styles of architecture with women, and appealed to them to improve the architecture of the American landscape.

Andrew Jackson Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* and *Godey's Ladies Book* also described the ideal home for American women. A regular feature in *Godey's Ladies Book* was "The Model Cottage." This column strongly influenced middle-class women's perceptions of fashion for thirty years, while also describing the moral uplift that proper home decoration and style provided.²⁴ "Aesthetic moralism," emerged in the 1850s that embraced, "the power of properly designed homes to mold character and stabilize the American Republic."²⁵ Morals and taste were combined to construct a morally based domestic architecture. As Americans transitioned from a traditional culture to a modern one, the home was the place where old and new ideas were reconciled under the careful eyes of women.²⁶ The blending of notions of women's morality with the notion of women's design ability would be used to justify their involvement in historic preservation. When nineteenth-century women started to preserve historic homes, they would apply their experience in architecture and design to successfully restore properties.

An essential aspect of mid nineteenth-century decorating was the collection and display of American antiques within a middle-class home. Antiques successfully merged the old and new in the American home, reminding American families of their glorious

²⁴ Berkeley and McQuaid, 7.

²⁵ West, 2.

²⁶ Berkeley and McQuaid, 7.

revolutionary past. Women collected antique furniture, flatware and other artifacts of America's golden age. Women bought and sold antiques, and their role within antique collecting equaled that of men. "Women could move seamlessly from decorating their homes, to collecting, to dealing on a par with men."²⁷ The familiarity that women attained with antiques in their homes added to their breadth of knowledge in historic preservation. Women's capability in acquiring antiques for their own homes led them to be effective collectors of American historical artifacts, an important task of women's historic preservation societies.

Women Domesticating American History

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 played a significant role in women's involvement with benevolence organizations and the displaying of antiques. Starting in 1863, women's societies worked on behalf of the US Sanitary Commission, holding "Sanitary Fairs" to raise money and supplies for soldiers. Women's fairs to raise money for charity were a long standing institution of women's benevolence. Women's church groups organized fairs, selling food as well as hand-made crafts, to fund various social causes. The Sanitary Fairs women arranged during the Civil War were quite popular with the public and generated a significant amount of money for the Sanitary Commission. By supporting the Union through their fairs, women lent their moral authority to the cause, creating patriotism and support for the war.²⁸

²⁷ Steven M. Gelber, *Hobbies: Leisure and the Culture of Work in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 144-145.

²⁸ West, 40.

The most popular areas at Sanitary Fairs were the historical exhibits women set up to sell their goods. Women recreated domestic scenes from America's colonial period to attract customers as well as to instruct their patrons in American history, reasserting the nation's stability during a time of conflict. Women constructed "old tyme" or "colonial kitchens" to sell the traditional dishes of the region, such as "Yankee" fare in Indianapolis and "Knickerbocker" cuisine in New York. The actual kitchens were decorated in the simple style of the colonial period, and women further authenticated the kitchens by furnishing them with objects from their own antique collections. In addition, the women who directed these kitchens wore the traditional dress of colonial women, sometimes wearing the old dresses of their great-grandmothers. Several women's groups had an auxiliary "relic room" to complement their colonial kitchens, usually with an old-fashioned fireplace and spinning wheel, as well as antiques. These historical recreations were among the first attempts of American women to gather evidence and present a historical narrative. Thus, they are important not only in the historical preservation movement but also in the development of women as creators of history.²⁹

Antique collecting reached an almost obsessive popularity following the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876, a fair marking the one hundred year anniversary of America. Again, one of the most popular attractions of the exposition was Miss Emma Southwick's "New England Kitchen," modeled on the colonial kitchens of Sanitary Fairs. Furthermore, the concept of period-styled rooms created by women for

²⁹ Marling, 38.

the Sanitary Fairs expanded at the Centennial Exposition into life-size recreations of colonial homes and log cabins. These colonial reconstructions captured the fascination of the ten million people who visited the exposition. Visitors were captivated by the furniture, food and relics from an earlier time, paying close attention to old and curious objects such as hundred year old tea kettles or wax flowers. Not only did visitors pay to see these historic objects, but they wanted to purchase them for themselves. Cultural historians refer to this fascination with objects from the colonial and revolutionary period as the “Colonial Revival.”³⁰

Nineteenth-century women played an integral role in the Colonial Revival in addition to collecting objects of Americana. Even before the Centennial Exposition, women’s groups such as the Ladies’ Centennial Committee of Salem, Massachusetts collected and displayed antiques to raise money for their cause. This women’s organization showcased “Rare Colonial, Provincial and Revolutionary Relics” to fund the Massachusetts exhibition at the Centennial Exposition. Women continued to collect and display antiques in their private homes but also furnished and decorated their homes in colonial style. The virtue of domesticity associated with the Colonial Revival appealed to women, allowing them to incorporate history into their everyday lives. They held “Martha Washington Teas” and “Washington Balls” as fundraisers for their various causes. When attending one of these fundraisers, participants often dressed up in colonial garb or as figures in American history. “Women were the primary custodians of the American

³⁰ Marling, 32.

heritage in its tangible manifestations, the keepers of the flame that burned upon the ancient hearth of the colonial past... [T]heir position of leadership in the colonial revival of 1876 is not surprising."³¹ Women embraced the Colonial Revival as the nation underwent startling changes after the Civil War. Using their domestic ties to American history, women sought to preserve the threatened social order as the nation faced reconstruction and urbanization.

As a result of the prescribed roles for women in the nineteenth century, it is a logical progression that women became deeply involved in the historic preservation movement, and ultimately, the development of house museums. After the efforts of pioneering women's organizations, historic preservation was viewed as consistent with women's private, domestic role as well as their desire for social reform. Additionally, "nineteenth-century concepts of women, which held that their proper sphere was the home but included their traditional role as culture bearer and preserver... [made] the preservation of the historic houses... a sanctioned, even exalted activity."³² Women absorbed in the cult of True Womanhood took the skills they used in their own homes and brought them into the neglected historic homes of the nation, creating a historic house museum movement.

The Development of the Historic Preservation Movement in America

The concept of historic preservation came to America from innovations in conservation that devel-

³¹ Marling, 44, 51.

³² Edith P. Mayo, "Women's History and Public History: The Museum Connection," *The Public Historian* 5 (1983): 65.

oped in Europe. Fearful of the possibility of revolutionary destruction, the French government, responding to the violence of the Revolution of 1789, used historic buildings to stimulate national pride and provide psychological stability for the volatile country. Buildings of historic or architectural significance were placed under government protection, preventing their destruction or modification. These structures were inventoried and classified by the Monuments Historiques, beginning in 1830. The architect employed by the French government, Eugene Immanuel Viollet-le-Duc, conceived the concept of restoration as well as the techniques to restore old buildings.³³

The organization and funds the French government provided for historic buildings would not occur in America for decades. Although nineteenth-century Americans felt the need to preserve historic buildings at the beginning of the century, they rarely acted on these sentiments. Preservation historian Charles Hosmer states that usually “the forces of commercialism triumphed,” and buildings recognized as historically significant often “fell before the wrecker.”³⁴ The few, though considerable, efforts of historic preservation in Europe did not serve as a sufficient example for Americans. Furthermore, Americans at the time were not inclined to be troubled with the past, but rather were likely to aggressively push onward to develop industry and business in the new nation. The preservation of buildings was not a moneymaking enterprise, and securing the means to preserve a historic building

³³ Alexander, *Museums in Motion*, 83.

³⁴ Charles B. Hosmer, *Presence of the Past: A History of the Preservation Movement in the United States Before Williamsburg*. (New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1965), 29.

often cost a sizeable amount.

One of the first instances of nineteenth-century Americans taking interest in the historical importance of a building took place in Philadelphia in 1812. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania planned to demolish Independence Hall and sell the land to commercial developers. Citizens petitioned the state government to save the structure, stating that the building still had a functional purpose, such as being used as a headquarters for elections. In addition, protestors cited the momentous activities that took place at Independence Hall, the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the creation of the Constitution. In spite of the many public objections, two wings attached to the structure were torn down, and irreplaceable wood paneling ripped out where the Declaration of Independence was signed. Finally, after the citizens of Philadelphia appealed to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for three years, the governor finally persuaded the legislature to allow the historic structure to remain standing, despite the projected economic gain of its destruction and sale of the land to developers.³⁵

After the rescue of Independence Hall, other attempts to preserve historic buildings ensued in New England. These endeavors were organized, but most of the preservation attempts did not succeed. Individuals concerned with America's short past petitioned state governments to preserve monumental buildings, and they set up subscriptions to raise money for the cause. Much to the dismay of these public-minded individuals, insufficient public support could be

³⁵ Hosmer, 29-30; Mike Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996) 4-5.

garnered to pay for the preservation of the buildings they hoped to save. Historian Mike Wallace attributes “this exuberant and cavalier demolition of the remains of the past” to the flourishing real estate market and the “antihistorical bent” of many Americans.³⁶ Numerous noteworthy buildings were lost during the first half of the nineteenth-century to make way for the advancements of industrialization.

For example, several residents in Deerfield, Massachusetts formed a committee to conserve the Old Indian House, the last home standing after of the famous massacre in 1704. They organized town meetings and published petitions in the local paper, but the group failed to collect the \$2000 necessary to save the house where it stood. The historical value of the Old Indian House could not compete with the commercial value of the property. Even though the cost to dismantle the house and reconstruct it at another location was only \$150, that small amount could not be raised and the historic house was torn down in 1848.³⁷

There were some minor successes in preservation by the middle of the nineteenth-century. Mounting fears of civil war between slave and free states encouraged the rise of sentimentality attached to the buildings associated with the founding fathers of the Republic. Akin to the French motives for preserving historic structures following the French revolution, white middle-class Americans held that memorializing historic buildings might serve as a remedy for the increasing disunity among Americans. From their perspective, all Americans could unite by actively

³⁶ Wallace, 5.

³⁷ Hosmer, 31-39,

constructing and remembering their shared past.

The fear of political disunity was illustrated with the preservation of Hasbrouck House in Newburgh, New York in 1850. New York Governor Hamilton Fish appealed to the New York State Legislature to provide the funds to conserve the house, which had served as General Washington's headquarters for the last two years of the Revolutionary War. The legislature submitted to Fish's request and added that Hasbrouck House was an exemplary site for Americans to come together and, "chasten their minds by reviewing the history of our revolutionary struggle."³⁸ The success of Hasbrouck House furthered the efforts of white middle-class Americans to preserve historic structures.

Each of these attempts to preserve structures was undertaken by public officials who recognized the political benefit of constructing a past through tangible material evidence like buildings. Private individuals had motives for historic preservation as well, many of them parallel to the state. In the 1820s, private individuals as well as some small groups recognized the importance of preserving America's historic buildings, although a historic preservation and house museum movement had not yet emerged at that time. Funding the preservation of historic structures was the movement's greatest obstacle, and far more buildings were demolished than saved. No standards were established until Ann Pamela Cunningham and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association (MVLA) set out to conserve the decaying home of George Washington at

³⁸ Richard Caldwell, *A True History of the Acquisition of Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh by the State of New York* (Salisbury Mills, New York, 1887), 21, quoted in Wallace, 5.

Mount Vernon in 1853.³⁹ Furthermore, by taking on the task to save Mount Vernon, Cunningham set a series of nation-wide precedents. Cunningham's organization to save Mount Vernon was the first occurrence of a national preservation movement, the first national museum movement, and one of the nation's first successful women's organizations.⁴⁰

Ann Pamela Cunningham and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association

Ann Pamela Cunningham first became interested in Mount Vernon after learning of its deteriorated condition from her mother, Mrs. Louisa Bird Cunningham. Mrs. Cunningham viewed the estate as she traveled by steamboat down the Potomac in 1853. Appalled at the neglect of the first President's home, she asked her daughter, "Why was it that the women of his country did not try to keep it in repair, if the men could not do it? It does seem such a blot on our country!"⁴¹ The Mount Vernon property was in a terrible state of disrepair, and the current owner, John Augustine Washington was unable to keep up the large estate. Also in 1853, rumors emerged that John Washington intended to sell the property to hotel developers. This incident undoubtedly sparked the desire to preserve George Washington's home as a history museum, protecting it from commercial development.⁴²

Mrs. Cunningham's idea to save Mount Vernon from deterioration was not a new suggestion. Attempts to secure Mount Vernon as a national shrine

³⁹ Hosmer, 31; Orosz, 182.

⁴⁰ Dubrow and Goodman, 20.

⁴¹ Mrs. George W. Campbell to Mrs. S.E. Johnson Hudson, September 1897, quoted in Hosmer, 45.

⁴² West, 5; Hosmer, 42-45.

had begun as early as 1846. A group of concerned citizens sent a petition to Congress to save Washington's home with the distinct purpose of preventing the plantation from falling into the hands of speculators. The petition included a statement from John Washington proposing that the Washington family sell the property to the federal government for \$100,000.⁴³ Two additional petitions to preserve Mount Vernon were sent to Congress in 1848 and 1850, but nothing came of these requests. In 1851, the Army wanted to buy the property to create an asylum for handicapped and injured soldiers. To the dismay of the Army board, John Washington raised the price of the estate to \$200,000, a price that the board could not pay. The exorbitant price that John Washington set for the property, which would be \$4,784,000 by today's standards, prevented the State of Virginia from purchasing Mount Vernon as well.⁴⁴ Governor Johnson appealed to the state legislature on December 5, 1853 to buy the property, stating that it could be converted into a school of some sort. Nevertheless, the legislature attested that Mount Vernon was priced far beyond its commercial value, and the State refused to pay that price.

Although George Washington's former home had lost most of its aesthetic grandeur, people were drawn to the site because of its association with the Revolutionary hero. Americans had treated Mount Vernon as if it was a patriotic shrine for several decades. Ameri-

⁴³ Hosmer, 41.

⁴⁴ John J. McCusker, "Comparing the Purchasing Power of Money in the United States (or Colonies) from 1665 to Any Other Year Including the Present," *Economic History Services*, 2004, <http://www.eh.net/hmit/pppowerusd/>

can and foreign tourists alike visited the grounds and picnicked on the lawns, despite objections from the current owners who desired their personal privacy. Often, visitors entered the house without invitation and stole whatever they could get their hands on; the pales from the balustrades of staircases and projecting ornaments from fireplaces were often taken as mementos. These intrusions caused a considerable amount of damage to the property.⁴⁵ Mount Vernon Ladies Association spokesman Edward Everett described the popularity of the estate, "It is quite natural that the People should wish to visit Mount Vernon, but if they insist on doing it in numbers that put to flight all ideas of private property... they ought to be willing to acquire a right to do so."⁴⁶ Everett supported the goal of the MVLA, maintaining that a house museum should be established, and the property should be opened to the public in a true democratic fashion, to educate and reform the masses fascinated by Washington.⁴⁷

Ann Pamela Cunningham was determined to save Mount Vernon from commercial development and preserve it for future generations, despite the many failures of other hopeful conservators before her. Cunningham was a Southern lady from a distinguished and well-connected family. She was born on the prosperous Rosemont Plantation in Laurens County, South Carolina on August 15, 1816 to Louisa Bird and Captain Robert Cunningham. The

⁴⁵ Edward Everett, *Mount Vernon Papers* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1860), 6. Everett acted as a spokesman for the MVLA during its fundraising campaign, as women in the nineteenth century were not permitted to speak in front of audiences of both men and women.

⁴⁶ Everett, 7.

⁴⁷ West, 6.

Cunninghams provided their daughter with the best education available to women at this time; Ann Pamela had a governess throughout her childhood and later attended the South Carolina Female Institute, an exclusive boarding school at Barhamsville. With her prestigious lineage and education, Ann Pamela was groomed to be the classic Southern belle, a genteel and well-bred matron. However, at the age of seventeen, Ann Pamela was thrown from a horse and sustained a life debilitating spinal injury. Though not paralyzed, Cunningham was confined to a couch and experienced numerous health problems as well as persistent pain.⁴⁸

Although Cunningham's accident severely damaged her body, it did not impair her mind. In fact, one could argue that her injury freed her of the societal expectations of the woman's sphere. Because of her excessive health problems, Cunningham was excused from marriage and childbearing, the focal point of most women's lives during the nineteenth century. She remained single and had the financial support of her wealthy family. This freedom allowed Cunningham to focus on her intellectual interests, history in particular. Cunningham published a history of Tories in America in 1845 and contributed to Elizabeth Ellet's three-volume *The Women of the American Revolution*. Cunningham was confident in her writing and knowledge; "mind," she said, "has no sex."⁴⁹ Cunningham's fascination with history, coupled with her relative freedom, enabled her to take up the cause of preserving Mount Vernon.

Despite the release from many constraints of the woman's sphere, Cunningham still retained the

⁴⁸ Alexander, *Museum Masters*, 179-180.

⁴⁹ West, 7.

characteristics of her gender prescribed through Republican Motherhood and the cult True Womanhood. As a nineteenth-century woman, she had a responsibility to preserve the dignity of the nation as well as its history for future generations. Even though Cunningham did not have children, she nevertheless fully absorbed this requirement of her sphere. Cunningham used the ideologies of both Republican Motherhood and the cult of True Womanhood when she called on the women of the South to save Mount Vernon in the *Charleston Mercury* on December 2, 1853:

Can you... suffer Mount Vernon, with all its sacred associations, to become, the seat of manufacturing ... destroying all sanctity and repose around the tomb of your own "world's wonder"? One of your countrywomen feels emboldened to appeal in the name of the Mother of Washington... retain his home and grave as...a shrine where at least the mothers of the land and their indignant children, might make their offerings in the cause of greatness, goodness, and prosperity of their country.⁵⁰

Moreover, as the political division between the North and South widened in the 1850s, Cunningham argued that women needed to project their civilizing influence now more than ever. In her letter, Cunningham reminded women of the legacy of Repub-

⁵⁰ Pamela Ann Cunningham, "To the Ladies of the South," *Charleston Mercury*, December 2, 1853, quoted in Peter Hannaford, *The Essential George Washington: Two Hundred Years of Observations on the Man, the Myth, the Patriot* (Images From the Past, Incorporated, 1999), 92-95.

lican Motherhood by evoking the imagery of the literal mother of the republic, Mary Ball Washington. She wanted women to be inspired by the deeds of the patriotic women in America's history and reclaim their position as the moral protectors of civilization. West claims that, "[Cunningham] set forth a public role for the republican woman based on [their] participation in the American Revolution as 'a vestal' guarding the 'fire of liberty,' linking patriotic action to preserve Mount Vernon to the threat of Civil War."⁵¹ By preserving Mount Vernon, women could create a tangible place for Americans to recollect the glorious events of their nation's history.

Cunningham did not have to go far to convince the women of the nation of the need to protect America's history through the preservation of Mount Vernon. Women had incorporated history into their everyday lives since the days of Republican Motherhood. Women were already responsible for the task of preserving their individual family history through the collection of family heirlooms as well as collecting Americana antiques to decorate their homes. In addition, during the Civil War, nineteenth-century women showed an interest in American history, expressing it through their domestic endeavors. Women competently displayed their knowledge of American history with the colonial kitchens of Sanitary Fairs and later played an active and dominant role in the Colonial Revival. Although women in the nineteenth century were not permitted to take part in the metropolitan museum movement or hold memberships in male dominated historical societies, women, through their domestic involvement, became skilled

⁵¹ West, 7.

amateurs in American history.

Cunningham's letter created a response that even she was not prepared for. She never intended to take a leadership role in the preservation of Mount Vernon, but rather had written her letter as a rallying cry to gather the women of the South to take the act upon themselves. To her surprise, Cunningham's letter incited the interest of women from all over the nation. This unexpected coming together of women from slave and free states on the eve of the Civil War received praise from the *New York Express* in July 1854, recalling how the "Bunker Hill Monument was finished by our countrywomen, without regard to section or feeling... Northern and Southern women [are] joining hand in hand and with hearty good will, in this patriotic duty of making Mount Vernon the property of the nation."⁵² To solidify the mass following of her cause, Cunningham took a step that no other preservation movement had ever done, let alone a women's organization; she obtained a legal charter from the State of Virginia on March 17, 1856, creating the Mount Vernon Ladies Association.

Cunningham wrote her letter not only to rouse the interest of women, but to also justify the public endeavor in the eyes of society. During the nineteenth-century, women's names were not to be seen publicly in print except to announce their birth, death or marriage. Even without considering the content of Cunningham's letter, the act of writing her letter was risky in itself. Although the cult of domesticity permitted women's involvement in social reform activities such as the elimination of prostitution and poverty, some men were appalled at the thought of women

⁵² Dubrow and Goodman, 20.

being responsible for the preservation of George Washington's home. Nearly all Americans viewed Mount Vernon as sacred ground. The "leading men" who had earlier supported the preservation of Mount Vernon turned their backs on the movement after Cunningham and the MVLA began their campaign to save Mount Vernon, "because it was a women's effort, and they disapproved of women mixing in public affairs."⁵³ Cunningham and the women of the MVLA engaged in activities that were not usually part of the women's sphere: public speaking, money management, incorporation activities and publishing news articles.⁵⁴ The opposition to the MVLA suggests that some critics did not think women could be trusted to properly preserve Mount Vernon, a task that would give women power over the molding of the narrative of America's history.

Although not a lot is known of Cunningham's personal or political views of feminism, her desire to preserve Mount Vernon took her very private life as a handicapped woman into the public sphere. West claims that Cunningham had "enough of a feminist consciousness to spur her bold venture into the public realm."⁵⁵ As in the case of women's social reform organizations, Cunningham and the MVLA took advantage of the notion of women's superior morality to advance women's causes. They combated public disapproval by asserting women's moral activity above male commercial and political interests. Cunningham called attention to the mass industrialization and

⁵³ *Historical Sketches of Ann Pamela Cunningham* (Jamaica, NY: Mount Vernon Ladies Association, 1903), 48-49.

⁵⁴ Mayo, 66.

⁵⁵ West, 7.

urbanization of the nation that threatened the moral standards of American culture as well as Mount Vernon's status as a historical artifact. The nineteenth-century concept that women were the pinnacles of virtue supported the MVLA's claim that they would preserve Mount Vernon without any self interest or financial gain. Cunningham argued that the women of the MVLA were compelled to enter the public sphere to prevent the decay of integrity in society. On March 13, 1858, Cunningham won over her toughest critic, Mount Vernon's obstinate owner John Washington, using all of her womanly charms as well as exploiting her frailty as an invalid. John Washington stated that "the Women of the land will probably be the safest as they will certainly be the purest guardians of a national shrine."⁵⁶ On April 6, 1858, John Washington signed a contract committing the sale of Mount Vernon to the MVLA for \$200,000.

Later in 1858, Cunningham amended the original charter to authorize the MVLA to purchase, hold and operate the property at Mount Vernon, instead of the Commonwealth of Virginia. By altering the charter, Cunningham appeased the wishes of her Northern supporters who feared sectional differences. "Cunningham's foresight, historical sense, firm resolve, and outstanding organizational and leadership abilities ensured the preservation of the nation's premier historic site."⁵⁷ In addition, Cunningham structured a national grassroots campaign by electing vice regents all over the country from New York to

⁵⁶ John Augustine Washington to Ann Pamela Cunningham, 13 March 1858, quoted in The Mount Vernon Ladies Association, "MVLA-Letter,"

www.mountvernon.org/learn/collections/index.cfm/pid/334/

⁵⁷ Mayo, 66.

California. These vice regents acted primarily as treasurers who appointed "lady managers" to raise money on a local level, taking the movement to save Mount Vernon into every county, town and village in their state. By 1860, Cunningham had organized vice-regents in thirty states.⁵⁸ Cunningham and the MVLA managed to raise the \$200, 000 to buy Mount Vernon as well as to establish a fund to support the restoration of the estate.

Cunningham succeeded in making historic preservation a socially approved role for women. With Mount Vernon in their possession the MVLA faced the challenging task of restoring the aging estate. It was in this endeavor that the women of the MVLA, the "domestic goddesses" of the nineteenth century, showed their ability to not only create morally uplifting homes for their own families, but also for the nation, and, in the process, becoming what today are considered historians of material culture. When John Washington and his family moved out of Mount Vernon in 1860, they left the house practically bare. In their 1858 report, MVLA Secretary Susan L. Pellet stated, "a considerable amount [of money] will be necessary to repair the mansion-house, to restore it with the garden and grounds as nearly as possible to the condition in which they were left by the Great Proprietor."⁵⁹ To fund the restoration project, Cunningham established a twenty-five cent admission fee into the estate, another precedent for historic houses, allowing the property to be self-sustaining. Cunningham firmly believed Mount Vernon should be restored to look as

⁵⁸ Howe, 33.

⁵⁹ *Report of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union* 1858, (Baltimore: Press of the Friedenwald Co., 1896) 4.

it did when George Washington lived there to accurately portray its historic context. The historic atmosphere of Mount Vernon was intended to fill visitors with patriotism and pride, as well as to inform them of their nation's past. To accomplish this, Cunningham used historical research to discover the original colors, décor and furniture. For example, she had a document in Washington's handwriting that stated one bedroom upstairs was yellow. After slowly crawling up the staircase in the house, she discovered seven coats of wallpaper in one bedroom and peeled each layer back until she found the original wallpaper; it was yellow. The MVLA furnished the house as best as they could, filling it with antiques from Washington's era.⁶⁰

Conclusion

Cunningham's success at Mount Vernon sparked a national preservation movement and historic house museum movement. After the Civil War, women's historic preservation societies formed on the model of the MVLA developed at an incredible rate. Between 1860 and the 1890s about two house museums were founded each year.⁶¹ The list of women's historic preservation organizations speaks for itself: The Valley Forge Association, Ladies' Hermitage Association, Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, Daughters of the American Revolution, Colonial Dames of America, Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and Daughters of the Golden West were only a few that had been founded. These groups preserved historic properties such as Valley Forge, Andrew Jackson's house, Williamsburg Powder Magazine, Mary Washington's

⁶⁰ Alexander, *Museum Masters*, 194, 196-197.

⁶¹ West, 43.

house, the Alamo, Monticello, Betsy Ross's house, the Cowpens National Battlefield and the Yorktown Battlefield. These benevolence societies preserved cemeteries and gardens as well, while also creating landmark commissions. Nineteenth-century women had taken charge of America's historic properties.

The preservation of Mount Vernon affected the movements of historic preservation, house museums and metropolitan museums. The nineteenth-century museum movement in America had not yet developed the concept of a museum that focused on American history. Even after the Civil War, American museums struggled to define their purpose. Americans desired museums that shared the history of the nation, especially after the turmoil of the Civil War. In addition, the rise of immigration into America fueled the need for institutions to "Americanize" newcomers. The popular history exhibits put on by women's charity groups at Sanitary Fairs brought the need for museums of American history to light. The "Knickerbocker Kitchen" at the New York Metropolitan Fair was touted by the fair's organizers as a "perfect illustration of 1776, as this generation is likely to get, at least in the way of a museum."⁶² Despite these women's lack of professionalization, the period rooms they exhibited at charity fairs and later in historic homes fulfilled America's need for history museums.

Additionally, house museums reached an audience that museums located in large, busy cities did not. The nation-wide fundraising campaign of the MVLA brought the concept of museums and American history to the entire country in a way that had never been done by proprietary or academy-owned muse-

⁶² West, 41.

ums.⁶³ The historic house movement that followed introduced the museum experience to small American towns, as historic homes were not usually located in a bustling city; those that were usually had been torn down before the movement started. Nevertheless, these small house museums stressed popular education rather than professionalism in their operations, giving Americans throughout the nation a historical foundation.⁶⁴ It was not until the turn of the century that metropolitan museums addressed history, following the lead established by historic house museums.

Women held a domestic role in American history, displayed in their involvement in antique collecting, colonial kitchens at Sanitary Fairs, and their leadership in the Colonial Revival. The domestication of history was brought about by the ideologies of Republican Motherhood and the cult of True Womanhood, constructed by late eighteenth and nineteenth century society to keep women in the home. Ann Pamela Cunningham opened the door to let women into the public world of history. She established the prototype of the American house museum and conceived of the method of restoration that is still used today. Her efforts to preserve Mount Vernon propelled nineteenth-century women's knowledge of American history out of the home and in to the public domain.

⁶³ Orosz, 183.

⁶⁴ Orosz, 183.

